# Gov't all set to take control of Cocobank

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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## High-tech gadgets: The next generation

SAN JOSE, California—Cell phones will double as handheld computers. Portable MP3 players will shrink in size but hold more songs. And televisions will be bigger, sharper—and cheaper.

These are some of the new—well, really just mostly improved—consumer electronic gadgets that will debut in 2002, a year that also promises some modest strides toward the wirelessly con-

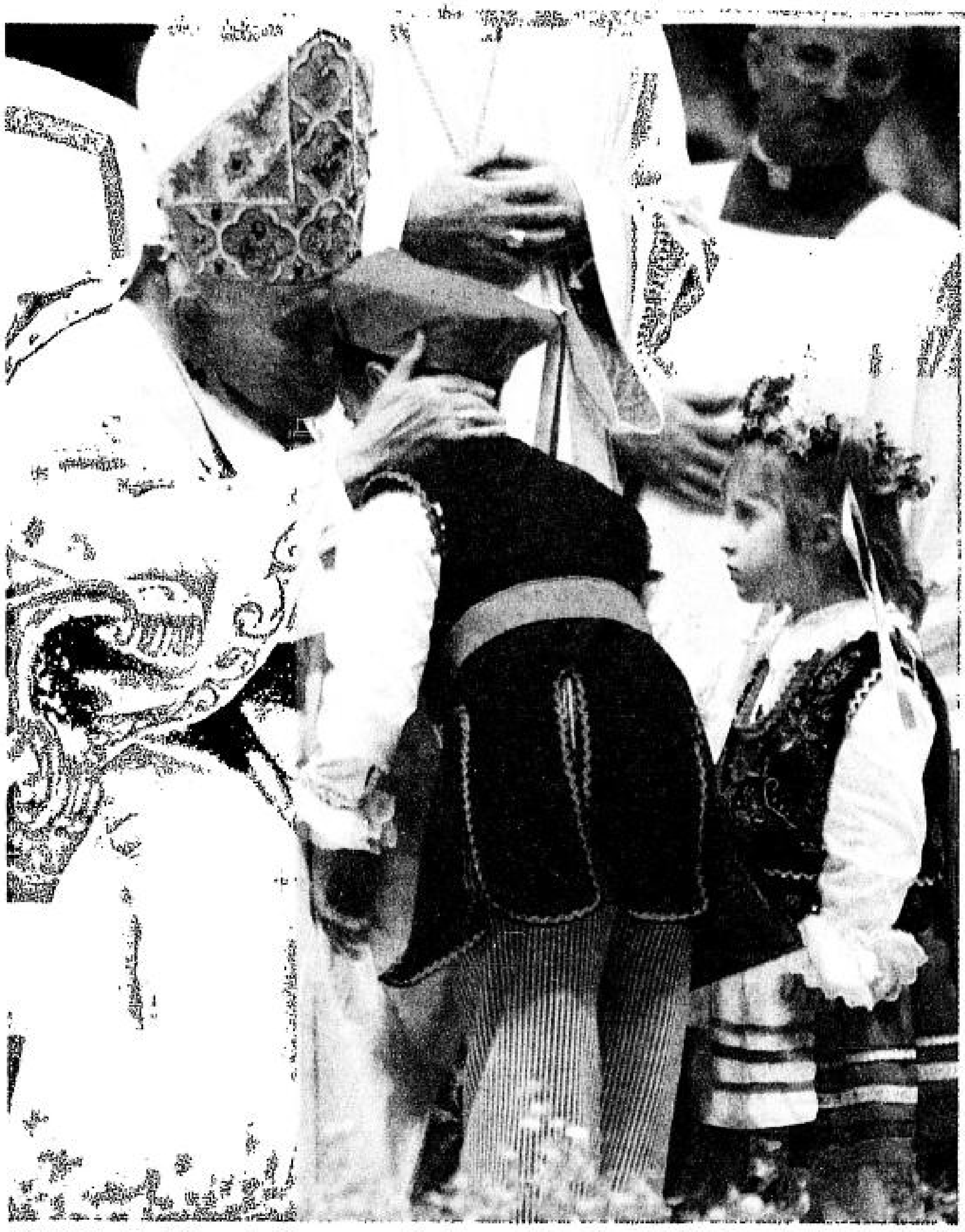
HIGH-TECH/ A14

## *Singapore gov't tries text-dating*

luv, wer r u? dto n ko!
can't w8 2 c u!

THE SINGAPORE government, worried about the country's low population growth, has found another means to encourage its single,

SINGAPORE/ A13



POPE John Paul II greets his young well-wishers during the midnight Mass in the St. Peter's Basilica. AFP

## Pope issues message of hope amid tension

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul II led the world's Roman Catholics into Christmas on Tuesday, saying hearts around the globe were anxious and distressed by war and tension but that Christ's message of peace remained valid.

Amid security that was tighter than usual for fear of a possible attack, the 81-year-old Pope celebrated a solemn midnight Mass for thousands of people in St. Peter's Basilica, Christendom's largest church.

A prayer during the Mass, televised live to hundreds of millions of people in 47 countries around the world, urged Christians, Jews and Muslims to "try everything possible so that the name of God is not exploited for works of death"—a reference to terrorism.

The Pope, wearing white and gold vestments,

POPE/ A14

# Ramos: I'm not running in 2004 polls

## Lakas leaders fear debacle in elections

By Stella O. Gonzales

**IS FORMER President Fidel Ramos playing games with the Macapagal administration? Or is he merely being used by some of his party mates to gain political leverage?**

Two ranking leaders of Lakas-NUCD-UMDP-Kampi, President Macapagal-Arroyo's political party, recently told the Inquirer on separate occasions that Ramos might run for president in 2004 because many people were convincing him to.

The two leaders said they were worried this would cause a rift within the ruling party and lessen its chances of winning the presidential election.

They said the party was trying to arrange a meeting between Ramos and Ms Macapagal, allegedly because the two were not on the best of terms because of Ramos' reported political plans.

But in an interview with this paper the other day, Ramos reiterated he had no plans to run for any political position. He is a spry 73.

He and the President also maintain good relations, contrary to what some of his party mates are saying, Ramos said.

"These Lakas people who are putting out this message are probably doing it on their own, for their own benefit. If they are not yet in positions of responsibility in the government now, they

RAMOS/ A14

A MEETING of the minds also took place between President Macapagal and ex-President Fidel Ramos during the AFP Day on Friday. EDWIN BACASMAS

## Nur's wife, children long for KL reunion

KUALA LUMPUR—The wife of detained Philippine Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari has arrived in Malaysia along with their three children for a possible reunion, an associate said Tuesday.

Elly Pamatong, a US-based lawyer who said he represents Misuari, told Agence France Presse that he was confident that Muslim majority Malaysia would allow the meeting.

"I am waiting for the Malaysian authorities to contact me," he said.

Pamatong said he had faith Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad would approve the family reunion.

"Being a fellow Muslim, it is important that he helps a brother Muslim. Family reunification is important in Islam.

"The wife Tarhata and children

NUR'S/ A13

RICCIARDONE: New US envoy.

## RP-US relations now back on track

By Jennie L. Ilustre
*PDI Washington Correspondent*

WASHINGTON—With the Philippines' all-out support of the United States' global anti-terrorism campaign, relations between the two countries are out of the doldrums.

US senators have promised to give the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo not only military but also economic assistance, echoing her declaration of simultaneous war against terrorism and poverty.

Sen. John "Jay" Rockefeller (Dem., West Virginia) said that with US President George W. Bush's "recent lifting of the ceiling on the national debt . . . we will follow up on our commitment that their (Filipinos') lives will be improved, and that America is behind them financially, not only in rhetoric."

This commitment was boosted by the quick confirmation of Francis Joseph Ricciardone Jr., 49, as ambassador to the Philippines. The US Senate foreign relations committee approved Ricciardone's nomination at his confirmation hearing early this month, paving the way for a quick floor vote.

For years, the US Congress had generally been ignoring major legislation affecting the Philippines.

Staunch friends of the Philippines, like Sen. Richard Lugar (Rep., Indiana), former chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, said Congress as a whole was smarting from what it perceived as the "unceremonious booting

RP-US/ A14

### 2002 BUDGET

## Pimentel hits bias against Mindanao

By Cynthia D. Balana and Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE NEWLY ratified national budget perpetrates a "continuing bias" against Mindanao in the allocation of government funds, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said in a statement.

Pimentel said he found it unacceptable that under the 2002 General Appropriations Act, Mindanao's total allocation was only half of that for Central Luzon. ***(See related story on Page A4.)***

Many experts have noted that the bias in the allocation of state resources has always been one of the causes of widespread disenchantment among the people of Mindanao, especially in Moro communities.

The former mayor and assemblyman of Cagayan de Oro City said it was precisely for this reason that Mindanao deserved a bigger slice of the budget pie.

He reminded the Macapagal administration of its pledge to implement a so-called mini-Marshall plan for the rehabilitation of war-stricken areas, particularly the provinces in Central and Southwestern Mindanao where the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf are actively operating.

"We, Mindanaoans, feel a sense of betrayal and outrage, over the persistent discrimination against Mindanao in terms of budgetary allocation which explains why many (parts) of the island-group remain undeveloped despite its bountiful natural resources," he said.

The new P780.8-billion budget,

PIMENTEL/ A13

**CHRISTMAS AT THE PARK**
The Family Day scene is replayed every Christmas at Manila's Rizal Park. AP

## More AFP training camps seen

By Martin P. Marfil

EXPECT the war in the countryside to change drastically with the impending arrival of more US equipment and advisers assigned to train Filipino soldiers in counterterrorist tactics.

Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said courses in what he called "field craft"—psychological warfare, long-range patrolling, jungle survival, combat engagements, raids and ambushes—would be included in the training program as part of the US campaign against international terrorism.

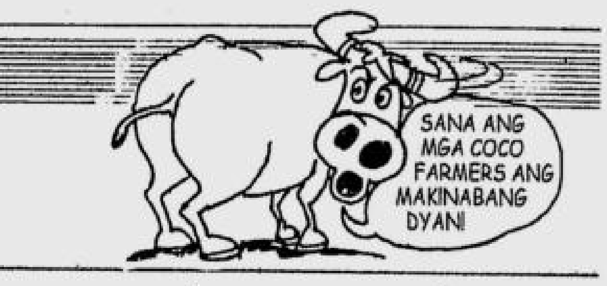
Adan also disclosed plans to put up a number of training camps in the country, including one in Zamboanga City.

"In the coming weeks, we'll be seeing the AFP receiving special training (and) assistance from our US counterparts," he said. "The idea is to give our troops the skills to survive long in the jungle, develop their resistance and their strength—basically, their skills to fight in dense terrain."

Adan said Filipino soldiers were actually taking these basic courses now but that combat troops and pilots required special training in, for example, the equipment needed for "night fighting."

The US government has sent military equipment to the Philippines in the aftermath of the Sept.

MORE/ A14



# Bombs found in Cotabato, Pagadian, Kidapawan

By Edwin O. Fernandez
*PDI Mindanao Bureau*

COTABATO CITY—A policeman was wounded when an unidentified man tossed a hand grenade in Pagadian City while three "unique" home-made bombs were found by authorities in Kidapawan, Cotabato and Gen. Santos City.

Authorities in Pagadian identified the slightly wounded police officer as SPO3 Loy Marcaman. He was pronounced out of danger.

In Cotabato City, a home-made bomb was planted under a lamp post along Sinsuat Avenue and was discovered by motorists at about 4 a.m. on Christmas Day.

A similar bomb was intercepted before it would be delivered to a radio station in Kidapawan City on Christmas Eve.

Lt. Col. Essel Soriano, chief of Task Force Sagittarius of the 6th Infantry Division, said the home-made bomb found at the foot of a lamp post near radio station dxMY on Sinsuat Avenue, was made of 81 mm mortar, M-203 grenade, 15 bullets for M-16 with timer and detonator.

"Had it exploded, many civilians would have been injured on Christmas Day," Soriano told reporters after members of bomb squad detonated the improvised bomb.

Soriano could not say who was responsible in the bomb.

He also refused to speculate.

In Gen. Santos City, military authorities discovered an improvised bomb near the church of Iglesia ni Cristo.

Bomb experts from the 75th Infantry Battalion defused the explosives.

Like in Cotabato City and Kidapawan City, the explosives were accompanied by documents with the sender calling for the establishment of Federal System of government in Mindanao.

In Kidapawan City, Jaime Bahinting, tricycle driver brought a big brown envelope to the police station on Monday afternoon. It was addressed to Radio Station dxND.

Bahinting told police prober that an unidentified man handed him the envelope and was told to deliver it to dxND.

He became suspicious when he noticed the envelope was so heavy. "So I brought it to the police for proper disposition," he told reporters.

Bomb experts discovered inside the envelope M-79 grenade, 81 mm mortar and 15 pcs bullets for M-16 rifles.

# Gov't all set to take control of Cocobank

By Michael Lim Ubac

**THE GOVERNMENT, through the Presidential Commission on Good Government, is now preparing to take over the ownership of the United Coconut Planters Bank, according to Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo.**

Marcelo told the INQUIRER in an interview over the weekend that the PCGG, with the help of the Office of the Solicitor General, would probably take over the bank this January.

He said his office and the PCGG were now mapping out ways on how to go about the takeover.

"But we will have to wait for the stockholders' meeting before we can do it," said Marcelo, who admitted that the government was wasting no time in reclaiming "what is rightfully owned by the small coconut farmers."

Marcelo said the consensus was reached by officials of the PCGG and the Solicitor General's Office following the Supreme Court's ruling declaring as "prima facie (apparently)" public funds the coco levy funds used in purchasing the bank.

The decision had allowed PCGG to vote the sequestered shares during the UCPB's shareholders' meeting, which was originally scheduled in March this year but was postponed pending the high court's decision on the matter.

Marcelo said the high court's ruling had upheld the government's position that the coco levy funds were exacted from the coconut farmers and thus must be used only for their benefit and advancement.

"We will see to it that the small coconut farmers and not the big coconut plantation landlords would benefit from the coco levies in the end. I will personally guarantee that," he declared.

Marcelo maintained that UCPB was bought by businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. in 1975 using the coco levies collected under Presidential Decree No. 276.

Coco levy funds under PD 276 are separate from the coco levies collected under Republic Act No. 6260, which was a levy (tax) imposed on coconut farmers in 1971.

Levies under PD 276 have been known as the Coconut Consumer Stabilization Fund (CCSF), according to Marcelo. "They were supposed to provide subsidies for the coconut farmers."

He, however, said Cojuangco used the CCSF funds to purchase the First United Bank, which was the forerunner of the UCPB.

"That was illegal," said Marcelo, who further disclosed that Cojuangco made it appear that he had the "option to purchase" to force the government to agree to the deal.

"In truth, he had no option to purchase. He did not spend a single dime to buy the bank," Marcelo stressed. He said Cojuangco pulled out the deal amid the influence he wielded during Martial Law.

COJUANGCO

Marcelo said the bank had an authorized capital stock of P28 million but was increased to P108 million with the infusion of an additional P80 million from the Philippine Coconut Authority upon the prodding of Cojuangco.

### Farmers' money

Marcelo said the money, which came from the coconut farmers through imposed taxes, were used to buy the bank for the sole benefit of Cojuangco. "As simple as that," he stressed.

In its Dec. 14 resolution, the Tribunal upheld the right of the government, through the PCGG, to exercise its right to vote the sequestered shares UCPB.

With a vote of 10-5, the full court declared that the sequestered UCPB shares were "indisputably acquired with coco levy funds which are public in character."

In upholding the right of the PCGG over the sequestered UCPB shares, the SC said the coco levies were raised with the use of the police and taxing powers of the State.

But the SC decision delved only on the issue of coco levy funds used in purchasing the UCPB shares, and not on the 31 percent shares of San Miguel Corp. The coconut levy is now estimated at P130 billion.

Cojuangco chairs San Miguel Corp.

However, the SC stressed that the final determination as to whether all coco levy funds were public in character rests on the Sandiganbayan, which has been hearing the civil cases filed by Cojuangco, the Philippine Coconut Federation (Cocofed), the PCGG and "one million farmers" over the last 15 years.

The high court then ordered the Sandiganbayan to decide with finality the "aforesaid civil case (UCPB case) within a period of six months from notice."

### More categorical

In upholding the PCGG petition, the SC set aside the Feb. 28, 2001 Sandiganbayan ruling allowing Cocofed, Cojuangco to vote the sequestered shares.

In the decision, the tribunal said it was now more categorical and positive than its earlier pronouncements: the coconut levy funds are not only affected with public interest; they are in fact prima facie public funds.

The decision stemmed from a petition for certiorari with prayer for the issuance of a temporary restraining order filed by the PCGG to set aside the Feb. 28, 2001 Sandiganbayan resolution.

Named respondents were the Cocofed, a certain Ballares, Cojuangco and the Sandiganbayan.

The assailed Sandiganbayan resolution allowed the respondents to exercise their rights to vote their shares of stock and to be voted upon in the UCPB stockholders' meeting on March 6, 2001.

In acting on the petition, the high court said the issue to be resolved was "who may vote the sequestered UCPB while the main case for their reversion to the state is pending in the Sandiganbayan?"

The SC said the petition is impressed with merit.

"The court holds that the government should be allowed to continue voting those shares inasmuch as they were purchased with coconut levy funds—funds that are prima facie public in character or, at the very least, are 'clearly affected with public interest.'"

The SC granted PCGG the right to vote the sequestered shares because they appeared to be "assets belonging to the government itself."

The SC said that the money used to purchase the sequestered UCPB shares came from the CCSF, known as the coconut levy funds.

# Fishermen's prayer: Deliver coco funds from evil

By TJ Burgonio

MILITANT fishermen have a new prayer: Deliver the controversial coconut levy funds from evil. And do not lead Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco to temptation.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) on Monday pressed the government to "withdraw" the coco levy funds tied up in San Miguel Corp. shares to remove it from the control of Cojuangco, the San Miguel chair.

"The coconut farmers would have to pull out their shares in SMC if the President refuses to junk Danding and his coconut syndicate," Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon said in a statement.

He added: "The coconut levy funds invested as precious shares in SMC would (then) be removed from Danding's control and manipulation."

Pamalakaya scored President Macapagal-Arroyo for signaling no opposition to Cojuangco's continued stay as San Miguel chief executive officer.

Sambajon said the President's decision to let Cojuangco stay was already a compromise in itself.

That's why there was a need to pull out the shares to avert another compromise deal involving the coco levy funds.

Pamalakaya spokesperson Gerry Albert Corpuz echoed Sambajon, saying the funds were not safe in the hands of Cojuangco and the President.

"We cannot entrust the coconut farmers' money to certified raiders of people's fund like Mr. Cojuangco and President Arroyo, who is the newest apple of Danding's eyes after deposed Presidents Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada," he said.

Sambajon and Corpuz stressed that the most logical step that should be taken by the farmers and the government is the "recovery of coco shares and its immediate return to coconut farmers in the form of benefits and other meaningful reforms."

"The government should fast-track the recovery of the coconut levy shares from SMC instead of flirting with the Cojuangco group for the sake of truth and justice," Corpuz said.

Sambajon also urged coconut farmers to file charges against Cojuangco and former first lady Imelda Marcos for allegedly using coco levy-funded shares in the United Coconut Planters' Bank for their own ends.

Cojuangco purchased a $1.4-million Sugar King Air 200 private plane and a $1-million twin-engine helicopter while Marcos withdrew $2 million from UCPB, through Cocofed, for the construction of the Coconut Palace, using coco levy shares in UCPB, he said, citing the book "Some are Smarter than Others."

"They embezzled public funds for their own narrow interests. For 30 long years, these people lived like oligarchs and aristocrats at the expense of coconut farmers' hard labor. It's time to bring these people to justice," Sambajon said.

The Supreme Court this month declared the coco levy as public funds.

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# Probe of Desierto lobbying sought in House

By Christine Avendaño

THE HOUSE leadership has been asked to look into reports that Ombudsman Aniano Desierto had lobbied for support for congressmen regarding the impeachment complaint filed against him.

On the night the House ratified the 2002 budget on Dec. 22, party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan) read on the floor a letter she had written to Speaker Jose de Venecia seeking for him to "take appropriate action" on reports that Desierto had approached and called up several congressmen about the impeachment complaint filed against him by lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr.

While the complaint has already been dismissed as insufficient in substance by the House committee on justice, its final fate would be decided by all 214 members of the House when Congress resumes session after the holidays.

In her letter to De Venecia, Rosales said that she was approached as well by Desierto who had asked her "not to endorse and lend my credibility to the impeachment petition."

Several other of her colleagues were also either approached or called by the ombudsman, who had been accused of taking a bribe in 1997 from a client of Francisco, the party list representative noted.

"As chair of the committee on civil and political and human rights expressing the sense of the committee, I feel that this act of lobbying and influence peddling is highly irregular and violates the spirit and intent of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employes," Rosales said.

She told De Venecia the House "must not allow for high officials in government and under impeachment scrutiny to lobby and influence its members who are tasked the sacred duty and responsibility to act on the matter of impeaching the Ombudsman."

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WHOLESALE & RETAIL:

# Giant lanterns wow 'em in Pampanga festival

By Tonette Orejas
*PDI Central Luzon Desk*

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Fondness for the out of the ordinary, the search for respite from the economic crisis and the enduring charm of a tradition rooted in Spanish culture lured nearly 10,000 residents and tourists to this city's Giant Lantern Festival on Saturday night.

Eight huge lanterns gave the wonder and fun that the crowd wished for.

"Great! Great!" a Caucasian-looking man bellowed from the largely quiet, awestruck crowd crammed at the three-hectare parking lot of the SM City Pampanga.

The lanterns—as big as 15 to 20 feet in diameter and illuminated by 2,000 to 5,000 bulbs—riveted the attention of the audience.

Silence, which was broken intermittently by claps and cheers, shrouded the dim park as the lanterns, each given five minutes to "perform," slowly unfolded their colorful, blinking patterns of stars, fans and flowers.

The lanterns' lights "danced" to the tunes of Christmas carols and party hits.

### Voltes V

Sparkling to the music of the Japanese anime Voltes V, the lanterns sent some children, many of them on their father's shoulders, jumping for joy.

Simultaneously flashing to the Star Wars' theme on the third and final round, the *parols* from the competing villages of Sto. Rosario, San Felipe, San Jose, Dolores, San Nicolas, Sta. Lucia, Del Pilar and Sto. Niño wowed the audience more.

For good luck, lantern-makers from Sta. Lucia and Sto. Niño brought their patron saints on splendidly illuminated *caros* (carts) placed right next to their creations.

Many brought stools to get a better view of these unique Christmas ornaments. Others brought still and video cameras to record the event.

"I'll bring the photographs to my relatives in the United States," a Filipina migrant in her 50s said.

At the end of the festival, many families remained to pose for pictures before the lanterns.

Barangay Del Pilar, whose lantern was more complex in design and its interplay of colors more brilliant and precise, romped off with the top prize in this year's Ligligan Parol (Lantern Festival).

San Jose and Sta. Lucia villages came second and third, respectively.

San Felipe, this year's defending champion after winning twice in a row, lost. Its lantern stood out though for its "techno" expression.

The judges had a hard time choosing the winners, according to Mayor Reynaldo Aquino. More than the cash prizes that were minimal compared to the cost of producing the lanterns at P150,000 each, Aquino said it was the prestige of winning that mattered to the villager.

He said the festival did not end on Saturday. From SM City Pampanga, which is a new addition to the festival's venues this year, the lanterns will be put on display at the roadside of the Holy Rosary Cathedral and at a vast, grassy plot in Barangay Saguin in this city's northern part.

### Hair clips

Believe it or not, computers do not run the intricate lanterns.

The secret of Pampanga's claim to fame—that of being the country's Christmas capital—is in hair clips.

Aluminum hair clips served as the sensitive points or conductor of the maze of electric wires attached to the light bulbs. When the hair clips scratched the rotors that are manually swerved like the wheels of a car, the bulbs light up.

There is a rotor for every blinking pattern. Each lantern has an average of 10 rotors operated in turns by 10 to 20 men.

To capture the pulse of the music and to lend a precise beat to the blinking of the bulbs, lantern operators dance like any dancer does except that his hands are glued to the rotor's wheels.

The festival also meant to enliven the lantern cottage industry.

"Economic crisis or not, there will be a Giant Lantern Festival, to boost the local industry, to make us merry and to make our Christmases truly wonderful," Aquino told the audience.

# Christmas in captivity

## Hostages spend the holidays with Abu Sayyaf captors

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A US missionary couple and an Italian priest spent Christmas as hostages of Muslim gunmen in the Philippines but the Army said attempts to rescue them had not slowed down because of the holiday.

"There is no Christmas break for the soldiers," senior military official Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu told Reuters on Tuesday. "Our operations continue."

Gracia and Martin Burnham, from the New Tribes Mission group, were kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf gunmen in May, when they had gone to a beach resort in Palawan to celebrate their 18th wedding anniversary.

Fr. Guiseppi Pierantoni was kidnapped from his rectory in Zamboanga del Sur on Oct. 17. Authorities suspect Muslim separatists-turned-bandits and say the priest is believed to be held somewhere in the area.

The Burnhams, along with Filipina nurse Deborah Yap, have been held on the island of Basilan for almost seven months.

Basilan is a jungle-clad mountainous island which serves as a base for the Abu Sayyaf, a group which has been linked to the al Qaida network of Saudi militant Osama bin Laden.

A crack team of some 2,500 Philippine special forces has been in pursuit of the guerrillas for months and authorities say they have narrowed the search to a small densely-forested area.

Thousands of other troops are being held in Basilan in reserve.

"The bandits remain very mobile," said Cimatu, who is the southern commander for the Philippine military. "But we have some leads to follow."

He refused to give any fresh deadline for the rescue of the hostages. Dec. 16, Christmas and the end of the year have previously been mentioned by various officials as deadlines.

The Abu Sayyaf kidnapped the Burnhams and 18 other people from the Dos Palmas beach resort in Palawan on May 27.

They brought the victims to Basilan, where the guerrillas released many of the hostages, apparently for ransom, kidnapped others and beheaded some.

An American, Californian Guillermo Sobero, was one of those killed. Yap was abducted from a Basilan hospital in June.

*Reuters*

# Erap's bleakest Christmas ever

By Volt Contreras

"EVEN in my wildest dreams I never thought this would happen to me."

That was deposed President Joseph Estrada on the phone with the INQUIRER on Christmas Day, in what could be his lowest moment since detention.

"This is the bleakest Christmas of my whole life," said the 64-year-old disgraced leader. "From Malacañang to jailhouse."

Dec. 25 exactly marked his eighth month in jail along with son and former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, his co-respondent in a historic plunder case being tried at the Sandiganbayan.

The man sounded morose and spent. Gone were his usual long statements that maintained his innocence. Instead, he kept his utterances brief and terse.

"*Wala, walang* happening *dito*. I slept it out," said Estrada, when asked how he spent Christmas Eve.

The Estradas' last few days leading to Christmas were marked by morale-dampening legal setbacks.

Father and son would have been merrier had the court granted their bid for am 11-day "Christmas furlough" from detention for them to spend the holidays at home.

In the interview yesterday, Estrada was still so disappointed with that court ruling, saying "even two days" would be enough for him.

The younger Estrada's petition for bail for medical and humanitarian reasons was also denied by the court for lack of factual basis.

ESTRADA

For the elder Estrada, perhaps the only consolation was his successful cataract operation on Dec. 16, which the court allowed after a string of pleadings.

On Christmas Eve, he said, he purposely did not accept guests except for his close family members "for it will only make me feel sad."

His close friend, action star Fernando Poe Jr., though, had already dropped by to greet him in the afternoon of Dec. 24.

Yesterday, some of his classmates from the Ateneo de Manila also showed up briefly, he said.

But the worst part of it all, he said, is that yesterday was the first time in 50 years that he spent Christmas away from his aging mother.

'Tis the time of year where they have a family reunion at his residence in Greenhills, San Juan.

"All my sisters, brothers, nephews and nieces are in their lola's. They are all busy now," he said.

Even his wife, Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, was not with him when the INQUIRER interviewed him at around 3 p.m. yesterday.

For some real company he only got his co-accused son Jinggoy, who was back since Sunday from the Makati Medical Center, where he was rushed Dec. 6 for a lingering heart problem.

Frequent guests said the Estradas and family did even bother to put Christmas decorations at their detention suite at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

# Waiting for Badoy

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is still waiting for Sandiganbayan Justice Anacleto Badoy to give a sworn statement to the bureau that a theft did happen inside his office.

Some of Badoy's employees refused to cooperate with the NBI's investigation because they want the justice to put in black and white that someone stole his resolution ordering the transfer of former President Joseph Estrada from the Veteran's Memorial Medical Center to his jail in Fort Sto. Domingo, Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Badoy's employees fear that the justice might have just misplaced the document.

But an NBI source said that despite Badoy's promise to give an affidavit, the justice has yet to submit one.

"Every time we go there, we remind his secretary to follow-up the affidavit. But we have yet to see it," the official said.

He explained that Badoy's affidavit would hasten the investigation of the missing court document.

This as the NBI ponders if it has enough evidence to charge court stenographer Janno del Rosario, whom Badoy suspects of stealing the document.

The source said Del Rosario has stopped communicating with the NBI and also failed to submit an affidavit he where promised to explain why his fingerprints were found on another document that Badoy had left on top of the missing court resolution.

Though the NBI has other suspects in the alleged theft, the source said Del Rosario was seen lying on a sofa inside Badoy's chambers.

Badoy left the resolution on top of the sofa before he went to a hearing of Estrada's plunder trial around 1:30 p.m. on Nov. 26. When the justice returned around 4 p.m., he found out that the court resolution was already gone.

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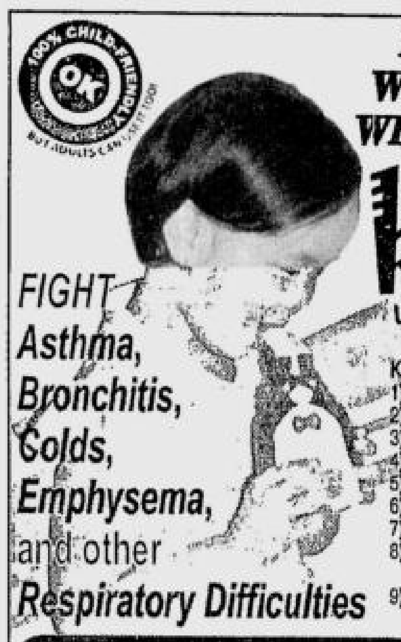

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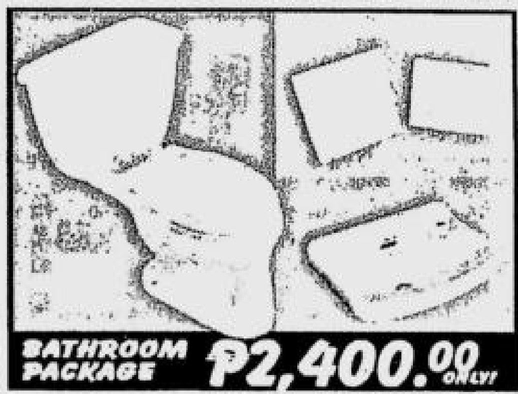

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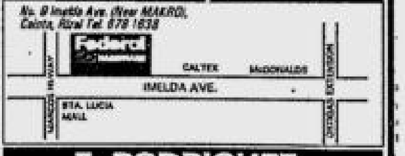

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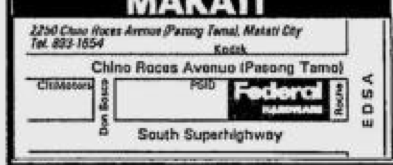

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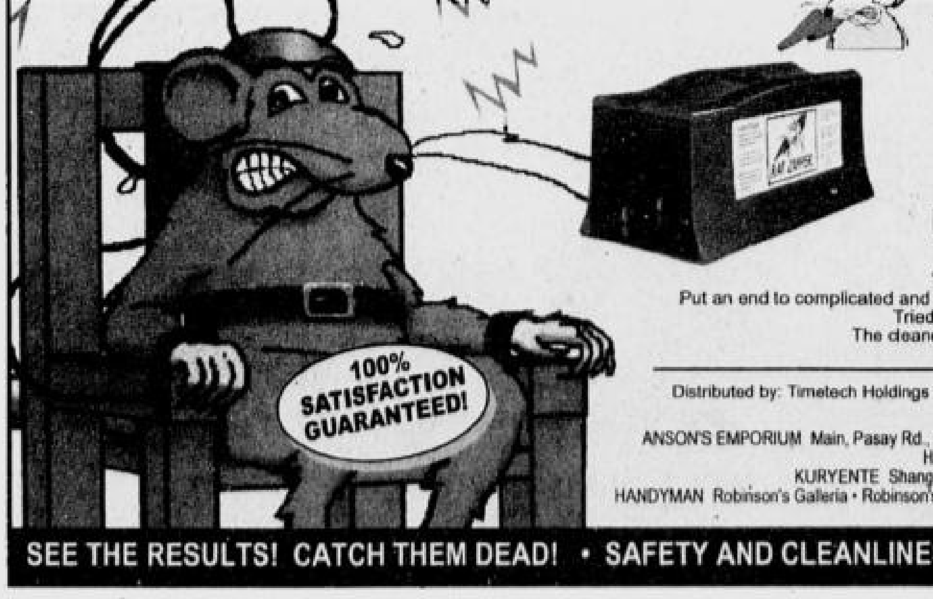

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# 2002 budget: More calories, same pork diet

By Carlito Pablo

IT may come with more pork, but Malacañang said the newly approved national budget was essentially the same diet. Only the calories have been adjusted.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said that although legislators added P2.28 billion to their pork barrel, the P780.8 billion appropriations bill passed by Congress "is the same (amount) as we originally proposed."

Boncodin said that what lawmakers simply did was to transfer P2.28 billion from infrastructure allocations to their Priority Development Assistance Funds, the new name for pork barrel.

In an interview over radio station dzMM, Boncodin said the fund realignment was effected by senators "because they said that they have constituencies which are asking for services."

In its version of the budget, the House set PDAP funding at P3.39 billion. The P2.28-billion increase was inserted during the bicameral conference committee meetings. Pork funds now total P5.67 billion.

"What the people are seeing is the increase in the PDAF. But it was only a transfer," Boncodin said.

She said the pork barrel increase was taken from the budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways. She noted, however, that the amount transferred out of DPWH was replenished.

"What they did was that what was taken out of DPWH, they fully replaced it so that the budget of the DPWH won't go down," Boncodin said. But she did not explain where legislators got the replenishment money.

She admitted that because of the increase in pork barrel allocations, the budget for the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines received an allocation of only P5 billion—half of the original proposal.

Boncodin noted that one other reason for the slash in the AFP modernization budget was the slow and tedious procurement process set in place. She pointed out that the AFP has yet to spend the P5.4 billion modernization fund released to the military last year.

Boncodin maintained that while the PDAP funding increased, the individual allocation of P50 million per congressman and P100 million for each senator remains unchanged.

Boncodin said she has spoken with leaders of Congress and they have agreed to strictly monitor the use of PDAF funds.

"There is no room for anomalous transactions in our budget," Boncodin said.

Finance Secretary Jose Camacho said that aside from collections from the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Bureau of Customs and other revenue-generating agencies, the government may be able to obtain "unexpected revenues" next year.

Camacho said these may come from such measures as the securitization of the Malampaya gas field in Palawan and the settlement of disputes over the coconut levy funds and the Marcos bank deposits.

LACSON

# About time, Ping says of Ador's expulsion

By Cynthia D. Balana

SEN. Panfilo Lacson yesterday lauded the expulsion of Ador Mawanay from the Witness Protection Program of the Department of Justice.

Lacson was reacting to an Inquirer report quoting Mawanay as saying that the order for his termination from the program was served last Wednesday.

Mawanay was a witness in the Senate investigation on the alleged human rights abuses of Lacson as well as his alleged involvement in drug trafficking and money laundering activities when he was still chief of the Philippine National Police.

It was Army Col. Victor Corpus, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) who presented Mawanay to the Senate to corroborate the testimony of Rosemarie "Rosebud" Ong who was the first to link Lacson to criminal activities.

"What took them so long to realize that this impostor had been fooling the nation all along," Lacson said in a press statement sent to Inquirer. "Col. Victor Corpus might as well be expelled from the Armed Forces of the Philippines for the same sin. When will they wake up on Rosebud?" he added.

The same report said that no specific reason was contained in the DOJ termination order except that Mawanay had committed a crime.

Mawanay has refused to sign the order, saying the "issues" between him and the Isafp were still being sorted out.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee investigating the Lacson case, said the public hearings will be resumed in January next year.

However, the committee will discuss the money laundering angle in which Mawanay was also a witness.

Mawanay had claimed to have broken the codes in the computer of Lacson.

He was also responsible for the alleged dollar accounts which were made public by Corpus and published in the Inquirer.

# No layoffs at airport –DOTC

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communication recently assured Congress that there will be no mass layoff of workers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport with the opening of the new international passenger terminal, Naia 3, in December next year.

Transportation Undersecretary Wilfredo Trinidad gave the assurance during a recent hearing by the House committee on good government on the alleged irregularity in the concession agreement between the government and the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) for the construction and operation of the Naia 3.

Trinidad said there would even be an influx of employment as the government would still continue operate Naia 2 or the Centennial Terminal for domestic operations and Naia 1 for other alternative commercial operations.

"I'm quite sure that there will be a deluge of functions as we would continue operating Naia 1 and 2. In other words there will still be the need for employees," Trinidad told lawmakers.

He also said that those who might be affected by the opening of the new terminal would be given employment preference by Piatco as provided for under the concession agreement.

"I would presume that there will be some people who might be affected by this development but it is provided also in the Amended and Restated Concession Agreement that they would be given preference in Piatco's operations," Trinidad said.

The concession agreement provides for a safety net directing Piatco to give preference to qualified employees in the hiring of employees.

Lawyer Moises Tolentino, spokesperson of Piatco, builder and operator of Naia 3, likewise said more job opportunities would be opened when the new terminal starts operation end of 2002 with the entry of new service providers. He dismissed as "baseless" fears of the members of the Philippine Airlines Employees Association (Palea) that quite a number from their ranks will be rendered jobless.

Tolentino also maintained that concession and terminal fee rates at the Naia 3 would still be among the cheapest in the region.

# RP maids get HK reprieve

## Oreta warns gov't against complacency, calls for integration program

By Cynthia D. Balana

SEN. Teresa Aquino-Oreta has warned the government against complacency following the temporary reprieve from wage cuts of foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong.

She said that Malacañang should craft a long-term reintegration program for OFWs as this predicament could be replicated elsewhere amid the global crunch.

"We wish to remind Malacañang that what our Filipino domestic workers merely got was a temporary reprieve from the wage cuts set to be imposed by the Hong Kong government," Oreta said.

She said the situation was likely to be repeated in other countries with many Filipinos due to the ongoing global slump.

Reports quoting Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said Hong Kong has assured Manila that it will not implement the wage reductions for Filipino domestics until March next year pending a review of its economic performance in the fourth quarter.

Hong Kong also said it will inform Manila beforehand of any plans to implement wage cuts.

ORETA

On top of the international financial squeeze, Oreta noted that the spillover effects of Argentina's political and economic crises on the world economy could also exacerbate the global situation and induce weaker demand for OFWs.

She recalled that Saudi Arabia and Malaysia separately announced a few months ago that they would restrict the hiring of foreign workers in selected industries as a way to provide enough jobs to local workers.

"That's why the government must not dilly-dally on this reintegration program designed to allow the domestic economy to absorb OFWs who lose their jobs abroad or decide to return home for good," Oreta said.

Oreta said the reintegration plan should include skills retraining programs, credit facilities to help returning OFWs set up small businesses or alternative livelihood projects, and emergency assistance for the displaced overseas workers.

She also urged the government to wage a diplomatic offensive to forge bilateral agreements with countries hosting a great number of Filipino migrant workers.

"The government should pursue with economies where OFWs abound a set of bilateral accords that would lead to more benefits and improved working conditions for these overseas workers," she said.

Such benefits, she added, included social security, protection from unfair labor practices, adequate wages, safe work conditions and ample vacation leaves.

# Avalanche of bad breaks imperil mining industry

THE PHILIPPINE mining industry, once a pillar of the economy, is struggling once more as it weathers an avalanche of bad breaks that have brought it close to collapse, industry leaders say.

The industry has been buffeted by low metal prices and is under continuous assault from environmental groups and leftist organizations even as bureaucratic requirements weigh mining companies down further.

Large deposits of gold, copper, chromium and nickel continue to attract interest with local mining companies eagerly seeking out foreign prospectors to inject much-needed capital for exploration.

### Foreign applicants

A law passed in 1995 allowing foreign investors to own a majority stake in mining ventures here brought in applications from about 50 foreign firms.

But a challenge was filed against the law and the suit continues to linger in the courts. Most of the discouraged foreign companies have since turned to South America and Africa where they are more welcome, industry leaders say.

"If they resolve the challenge to the constitutionality of the mining (liberalization) act which has been in the Supreme Court for about five years now... I'm sure the foreign investors will make a comeback here," said Artemio Disini, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines.

### Exploitation

Left-wing groups say the law violates a constitutional provision restricting exploitation of natural resources to Filipinos while environmentalists decry possible damage to the countryside.

Foreign capital is crucial to sustain the battered industry and to open promising new mines. Of the 13 major mining companies that once operated in the Philippines, only two of them—Lepanto and Philex—are still engaged in large-scale mining.

The industry now generates only 1.7 percent of total exports, down from 21 percent in the 1980s, according to government figures.

Mining, which previously accounted for 3.2 percent of the gross domestic product, saw its contribution fall to 1.1 percent from 1996 to 2000, government figures show.

Horacio Ramos, head of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, says the Philippines could produce 10 new "world class mines" in the next decade with potential sales of $4 billion annually given the right investment conditions.

Mining officials say the opposition to the industry comes from leftist groups who oppose foreign investment as well as from environmental groups who allegedly ignore technological advances that minimize damage caused by mining activities.

They wryly observe that many of these local environmentalists enjoy subsidies from developed countries which have healthy mining industries of their own.

### Crucial role

Socio-economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas says the government sees mining as playing a crucial role in helping develop the more backward areas.

"Mining provides jobs in the countryside, particularly in poverty-stricken areas since most if not all existing or potential mining areas are located in these regions," Canlas observed.

In addition, "large-scale mining operations have usually been accompanied by infrastructure development and mining companies tend to provide roads, power, water, housing and schools" to these areas.

Officials and industry experts agree that the Philippines has some of the strictest mining regulations, in such areas as environmental protection and in revenue-sharing with local governments and communities.

### Southern regions

Canadian Ambassador Robert Colette says his government is promoting mining in the Philippines as part of its poverty reduction programs, especially in the strife-torn southern regions.

"I firmly believe that mining—and I mean sustainable mining—could significantly contribute to poverty reduction in the Philippines," he said recently at a mining conference.

"Most of these resources are located in the most rural and remote areas of the country where poverty is greatest and where the need for employment and economic development is most acute," Colette said. *AFP*

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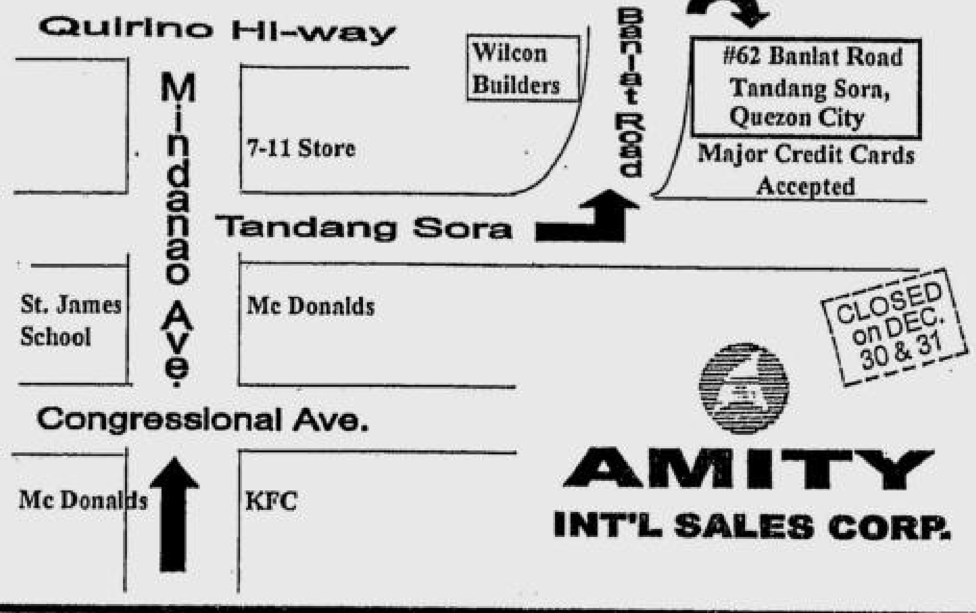

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# No shortage of charity

## Philanthropy at all-time high despite hard times

By Vincent Cabreza
and Desiree Caluza
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAGUIO CITY—Filipino philanthropy is at an all-time high this Christmas despite the economic impact of the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States, according to government and private welfare experts.

And if many Baguio carolers are being turned away this season, it is simply because there is little left to give away, said Lisa Balao, a state welfare officer in charge of the city's street children.

Balao said the Department of Social Welfare and Development programs addressing urban child labor and street children had benefited from sustained, if meager, financial support from traditional charity foundations in the last three years.

Going by the charity work this month, Balao said, the global recession triggered by the Sept. 11 attacks had apparently not broken the Christmas spirit of helping.

The government has not been monitoring the flow of charity funds that support social work programs.

But an official of the Bureau of Internal Revenue estimated Cordillera-based charity work to be worth as much as P12 million this year.

The official said many corporate charity projects were tax-deductible.

### School clubs, NGOs

Balao admitted, however, that the DSWD had been braced for tougher times this year because "non-traditional" charity groups like school clubs and non-government organizations were slowly replacing its traditional fund sources.

In fact, Baguio will soon lose the subsidy of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid), which has anchored the city's programs for child welfare and street children, she said.

"Charity supporters have actually multiplied," Balao said in Filipino. "We used to deal with one fund source, but now we have six or seven of them for a specific program. What appears to be happening is that the financing is simply drying up."

The government's current pool of financial support has also not matched the growing volume of beneficiaries, who become wards of the DSWD, she said.

In Baguio alone, the office of the DSWD officer has noted an increase in "urban child beneficiaries" from 77 in 1999 to 100 in 2000, and 138 this year.

This represents a fraction of the estimated 1,000 street children in the city.

"These facts are essential because the biggest charities still donate to children-friendly programs and nothing else," Balao said.

But she said the government welcomed the explosion of non-traditional philanthropy work, many of which were active this Christmas.

### First time

Dr. Gilda Wong, psychiatry department head of the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center, said high school and college students donated clothes and food to patients of the psychiatric ward.

"This is actually the first time for us but we had to turn them away," Wong said last week. "They wanted to meet the patients they were helping, and we could not do that. We referred them instead to (other wards of the hospital), where they can actually see patients."

More carolers now also roam the city—an indication of the sheer volume of "the needy" that had surfaced in Baguio since September.

A cashier at a local restaurant said she was authorized to release only P1 to carolers but that she spent an average of P30 a day.

Many established civic organizations have cut down on Christmas charity work because of the presence of non-traditional philanthropists.

Councilor Elmer Datuin, former president of the Lions Club-Baguio chapter, said medical missions scheduled for Christmas received reduced financial support from their sister clubs in Japan and Korea, compared to previous Christmases.

"We have been experiencing this since last year when our counterparts from Japan and Korea were unable to gather enough funds for our missions," Datuin said.

"Of course, if our counterparts from the other countries are affected, it is expected that this will go all the way down to the lowest level," he said.

But Datuin stressed that the civic group's charity work had not stopped. Instead, organizations reduced their support to sectors, which are now being addressed by new non-traditional charity groups like school clubs, he said.

### Party

Last week, students of the Saint Louis University Girls High School treated the children of Kilusang Mayo Uno-Cordillera members to a Christmas party.

"This is the third year that (the SLU) has been (conducting) this project for our children," said KMU member Christy Turafing. "We deeply appreciate their good deed because they understand how important sharing is to their less fortunate brothers and sisters."

Turafing said the SLU Girls High School's Alay Pamasko program used to be part of the school's community immersion project that was started in 1999 for retrenched workers of the Vital Farms in La Trinidad, Benguet.

"The feedback from the workers (is) positive, because the project has been a great help (to) the families who were affected by retrenchments," Turafing said, adding:

"The Christmas spirit is there."

**BRIGHT-EYED** Aeta children from Iba, Zambales, display gifts they receive from motorists.
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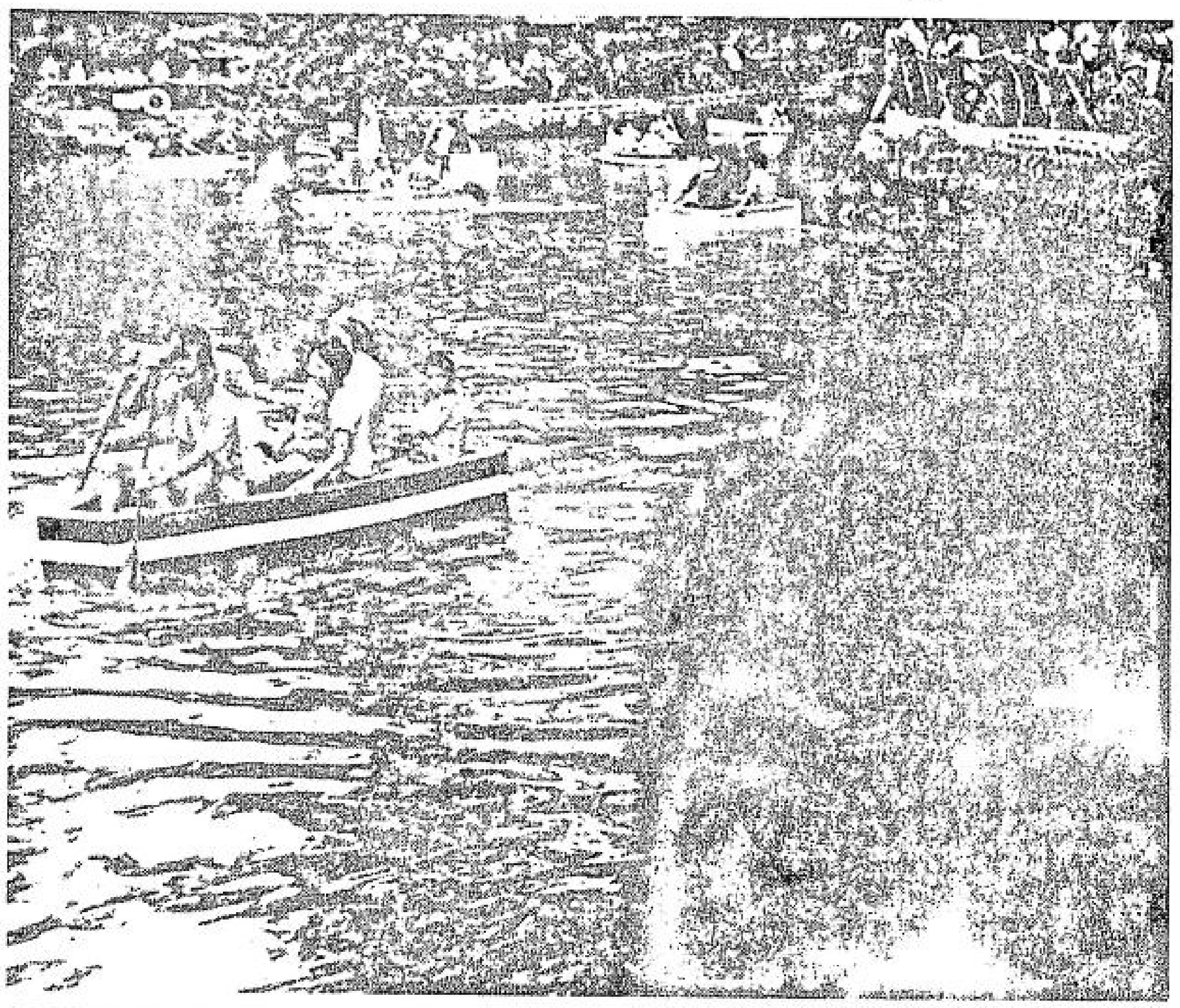
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

# Children's day: Hope of humanity



**AROUND AND AROUND** the lagoon in the Zoo the families go.
VALHANDUMON

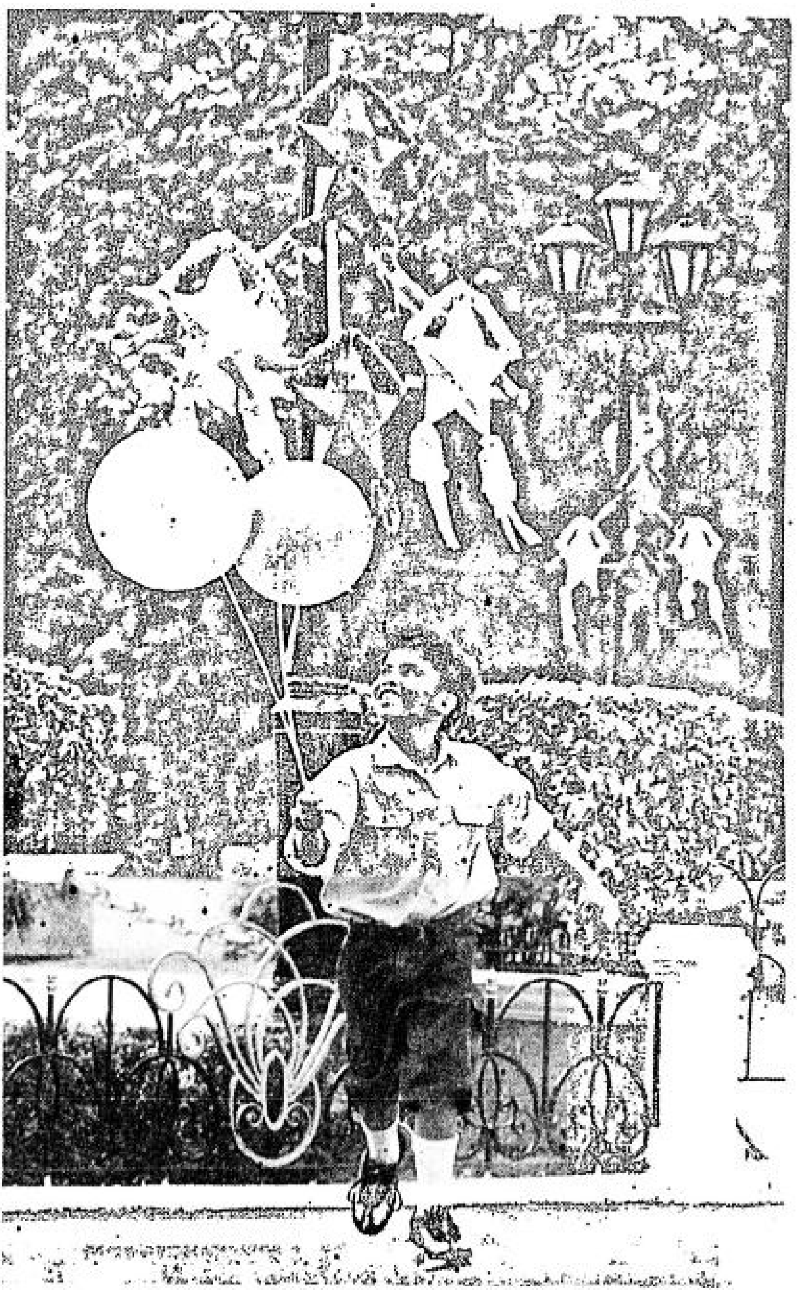
**ON CHRISTMAS Day, the children take over the country's open spaces. In the comforting vastness of Rizal Park, or in the well-kept gardens of the Manila Zoo, or even right in the middle of once-busy city streets, the children come into their own.**

For instance: A group of Aeta children from Iba, Zambales, descended on the capital region's thoroughfares, to spend the day in the city and to accept gifts—their eyes beaming—from passing motorists. They will go back to Iba today.

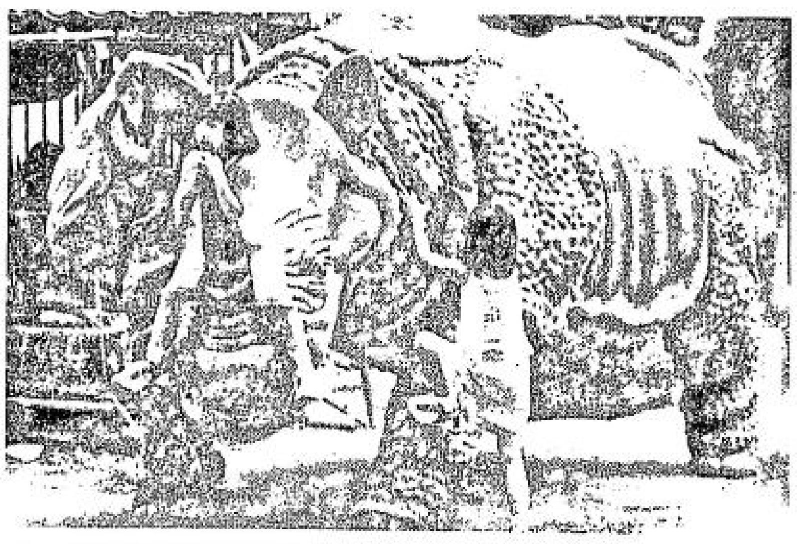
Another instance: Families from all walks of life went boating in the Manila Zoo, in a faithful replica of the famous Burnham Park tradition in Baguio City. The grown-ups come down to earth beginning today.

Or yet another instance: Children invaded Rizal Park, taming the artificial rhinoceros, splurging on cotton candy, chasing after balloons.

Christmas, we have been told many times, is for children of all ages. These photos, like the Christmas message of Pope John Paul II, remind us that children, with their open hearts and open hands, are truly the hope of humanity.

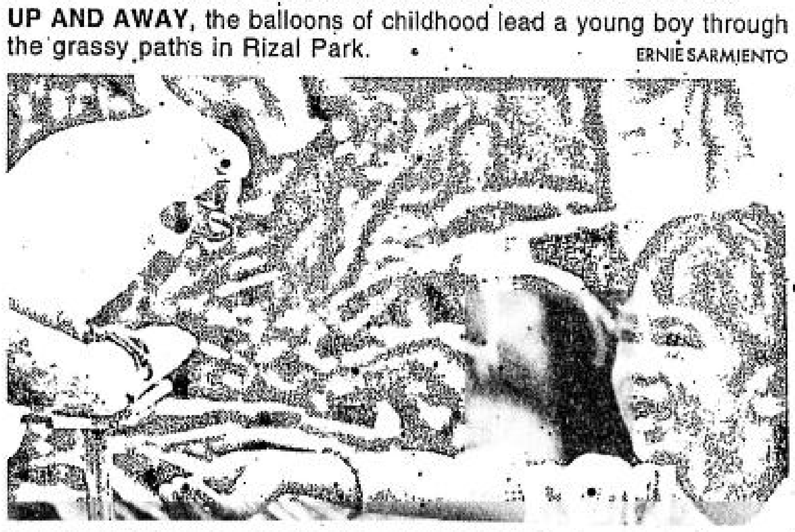


**UP AND AWAY,** the balloons of childhood lead a young boy through the grassy paths in Rizal Park.
ERNIE SARMIENTO

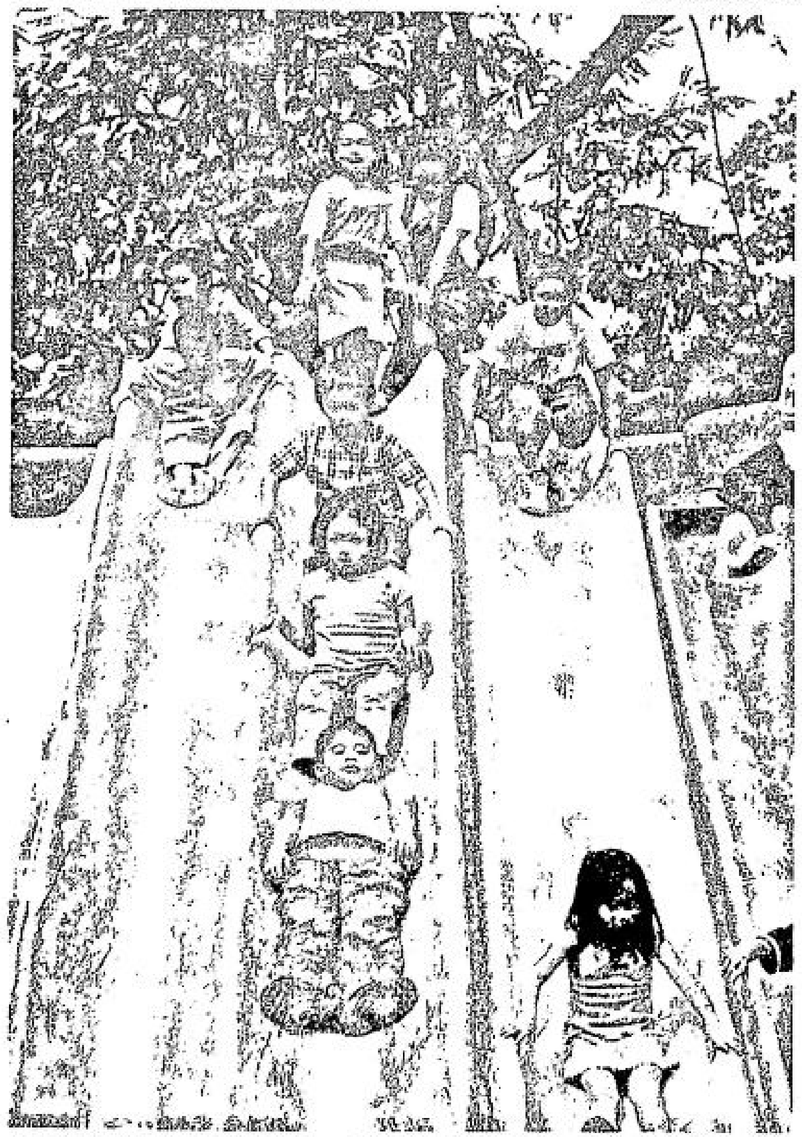


**ONE GIANT JOY RIDE,** these children must be thinking as they climb all over the Luneta rhinoceros.
ERNIE SARMIENTO

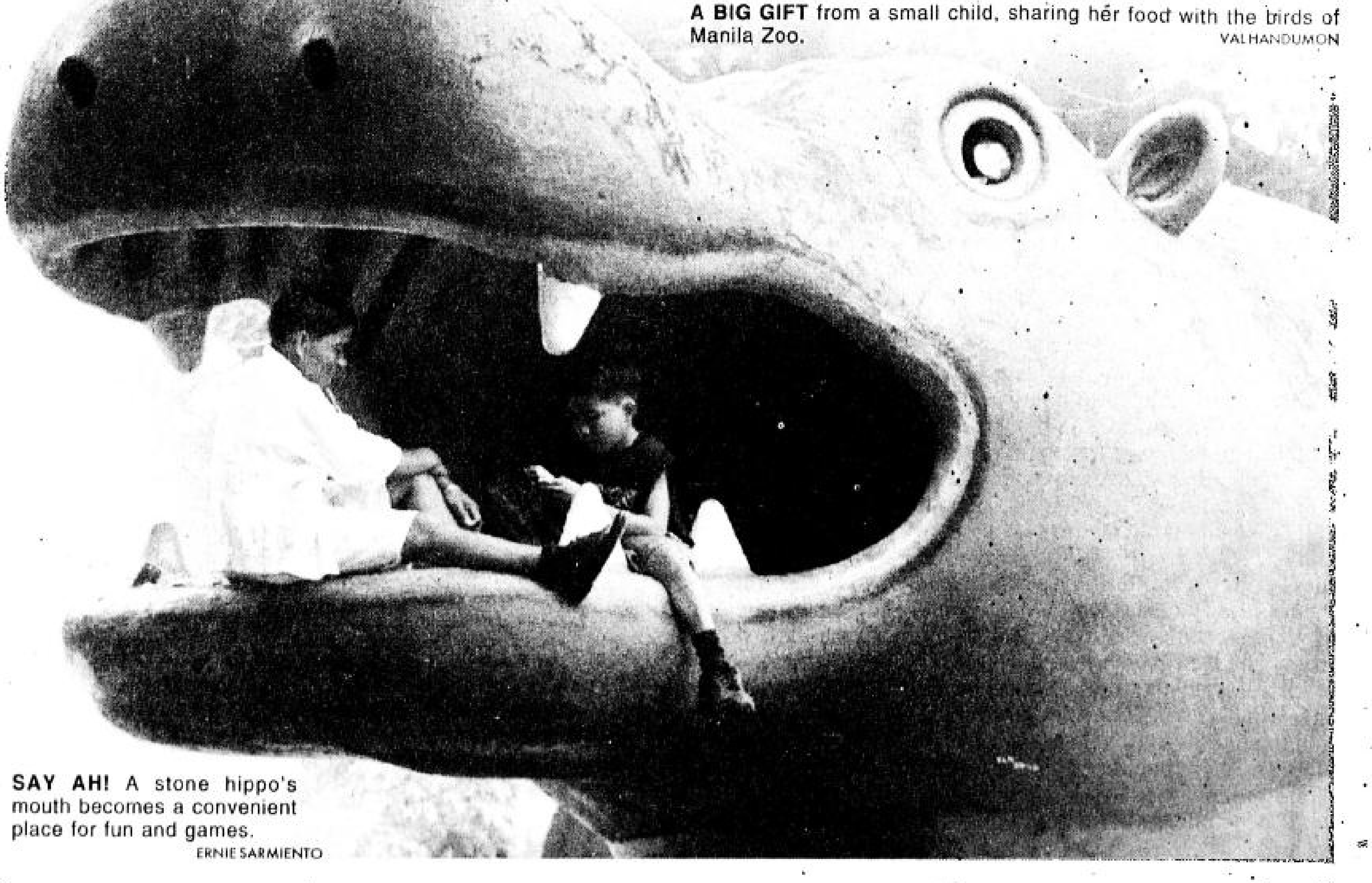
**MAKE IT BIG,** these young boys seem to plead, as they wait for their cotton candy to shape up.
VALHANDUMON



**A BIG GIFT** from a small child, sharing her food with the birds of Manila Zoo.
VALHANDUMON



**SAY WHEE!** In Rizal Park, children slip-slide the holiday away.
ERNIE SARMIENTO



**SAY AH!** A stone hippo's mouth becomes a convenient place for fun and games.
ERNIE SARMIENTO

# OPINION

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**EDITORIALS**

## Victims

THE RELEASE or rescue of several kidnap-for-ransom victims in the last few days is welcome news, the kind that allows us to deepen our understanding of the true gift of the season. In the Christian story of salvation, Christ became man in order to release us from our captivity—from the bondage of sin, from the coils of a life without purpose and a death without meaning.

But as we say a prayer of thanks for the recovery of the teenager Angela Dee Pineda, the Canadian Pierre Belanger, the businessman Victor Castañeda and the store owner Mae Ling Ang, let us not forget that several more victims remain in the hands of their abductors.

Their fate remains uncertain—especially that of the Americans Martin and Gracia Burnham, who were kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf on May 27, the Filipino nurse Deborah Yap, kidnapped by the same group on June 2, and Italian missionary Fr. Beppe Pierantoni, kidnapped by the Pentagon gang on Oct. 17.

But in Christian theology, the meaning of their suffering (the Burnhams, for instance, mark their seventh month as hostages tomorrow) is clear and certain. They are participating in the redemptive passion of Christ. Well and good, but isn't this theme better discussed during Lent? For many of us, talk of suffering and salvation during the holidays seems, well, out of season.

But peel away the commercial hype that has bubble-wrapped the season, and we can see that the crucifixion—and thus the suffering that is at the heart of the Christian religion—is already anticipated in the circumstances of the birth of Jesus.

Consider the census-prompted journey that led to Bethlehem in the first place. That was no dash through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh. A poor couple had made the difficult journey on pain of official disfranchisement, the carpenter afflicted by worry, the woman heavy with child.

Consider the mangy stable where the virgin birth is believed to have actually taken place. That was no silent night—and how could it be, when the woman's labor pains must have added to the noise made by the donkeys, the camels and other restless animals in that accidental menagerie?

Or consider the first visitors at the birth, the lowly shepherds who were as poor and as lost as the sheep they tended. They were no convivial carolers, meandering minstrels; they almost certainly were not roasting chestnuts over an open fire when they first heard of the virgin birth. The nocturnal nature of their jobs and their damning lack of education made them, from the start, virtual outcasts from a hierarchical, reading-driven society.

Strip away the commercial trimmings then, and we should see that the Christmas story has a victim—in the Christian belief, nothing less than the sacrificial Lamb of God—in the center of the plot.

## Martyrs

THE COMMERCIAL shrink-wrapping of Christmas may have started innocently enough, but over time the lifestyle traditions of Christians evolved away from the dirty manger, the unkempt stable, the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes as a protection against disease and the elements.

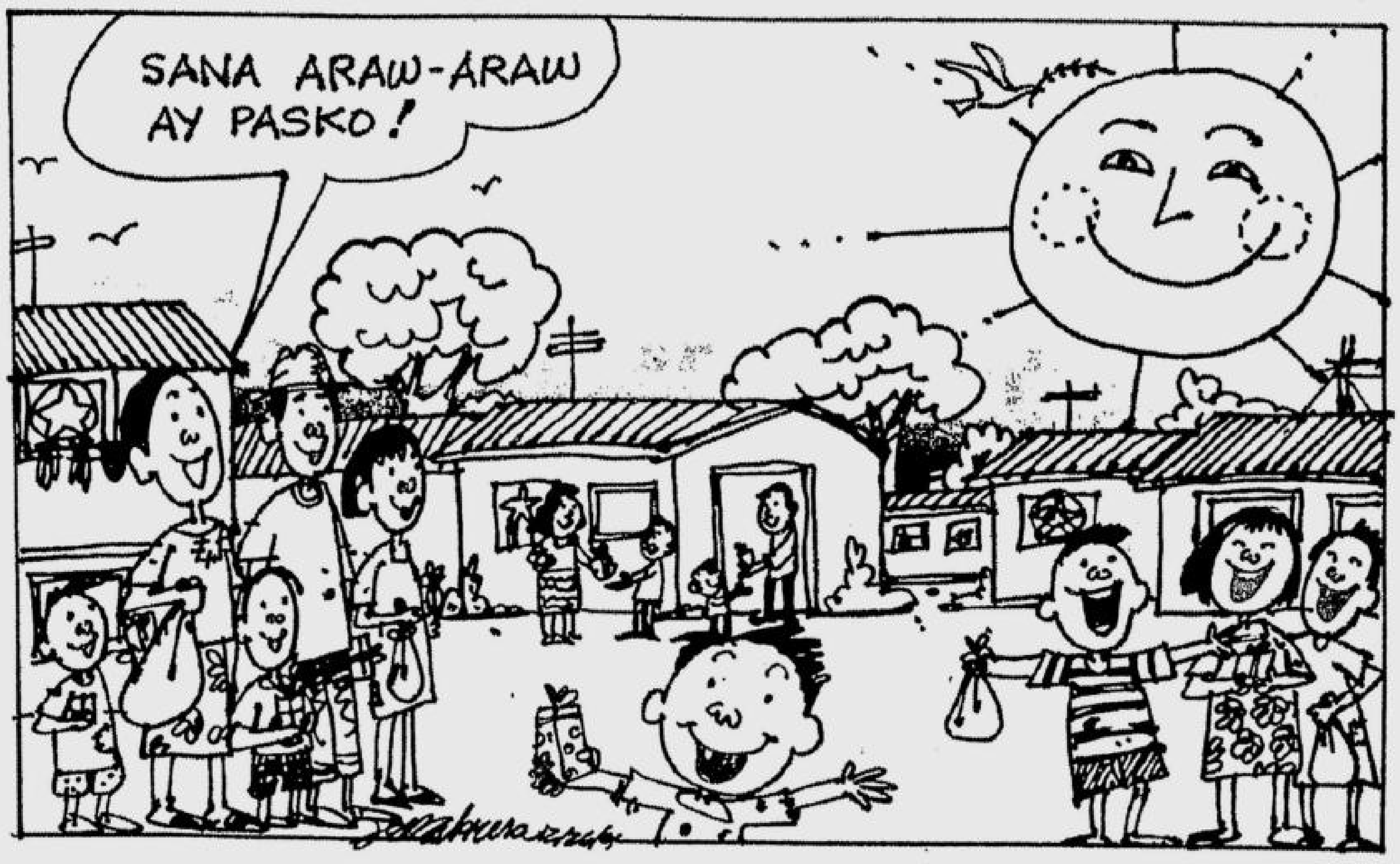
Today, and for many of us, the day is a feel-good occasion, a time for greeting-card sentiment. Any talk about the redemptive passion of that same baby, now grown up and shorn of garments except for a crown of thorns, is difficult, perhaps even presumptuous.

Fortunately, the religious in charge of the Christian liturgical calendar have managed to poke a hole in the commercial packaging of Christmas by marking the day right after it as the feast day of the Church's first martyr.

Let's think about that, for a moment. After all the feasting, all the gift-giving, all the Santa-Claus-is-coming-to-town list-making, our attention is now directed to the violent story of St. Stephen.

Why was St. Stephen stoned to death? Because he was giving witness to the new faith. Some 30-odd years separate the birth of Jesus and the violent death of St. Stephen, but because of the coincidences of time believers can also truthfully say that the first martyr died the day after the savior's birth.

We live in a violent world. Let it not be said that the Christian faith—which has played a role in our country's history, and to which many of us still adhere—glosses over that fact. The example of St. Stephen continues to teach us that victimhood and martyrdom are as much a part of the Christmas story as dawn Masses, midnight meals, and angels sweetly singing o'er the plains.


SANA ARAW-ARAW AY PASKO!

## Are things really better? Not for this family

**AS I SEE IT**

*Neal H. Cruz*

ONE of our Christmas visitors yesterday was a sometime acquaintance whom I will call Juan, his wife Maria, and their youngest boy whom they call—of course—"Boy." The couple never fails to call every Christmas Day. Each year, they seem to become poorer, thinner and sadder.

They looked even thinner yesterday, their clothes even more threadbare, but they looked happy, which was so unusual of them. "Merry Christmas," I greeted them at the door. "Your Christmas must be prosperous. You look happy."

"Because good times are ahead," Juan replied.

"How did you know that?" I asked.

"Because President Macapagal said so. Didn't you hear her on TV last Thursday?"

"Oh that. Yes, I heard her."

I bade them come inside where I served them *lechon*, ham, cheese, bread, fruits and soft drinks. I sat across the table from them and, as they ate, asked them how life had been with them.

"I lost my job at the factory," Juan said, spearing a piece of ham. "The factory closed shop. Almost all my neighbors lost their jobs, too." (Juan's family lives in a squatter colony.)

"Why did the factory close?"

"Well, business was bad. And, my boss was kidnapped. The family had to sell everything to raise the ransom money."

"Oh, my gosh!"

"The other week, the jeepney I was riding in was held up," Maria stopped eating long enough to butt in. "They took the passengers' money and all the driver's earnings. Last week, the pawnshop near where we live was robbed. And the killing of that tricycle driver is still unsolved until now."

"Oh, my goodness," I said, "crime is really going up."

"They'll solve those crimes," Juan said. "The PNP solves 93 percent of all crimes."

"Where did you get that?"

"The PNP said so."

"They haven't solved the Nida Blanca case, the Bubby Dacer case, the Edgar Bentain case, the Valerio case and many other cases," Maria interrupted.

"We have never been held up, nor our house robbed," Juan volunteered.

"Because there's nothing to take from you and our house in the first place," Maria said. "That's the good thing about being poor. You're not afraid of being robbed."

"Uneasy lies the people with full pockets," I said.

"*'Nay, gutom pa 'ko*" the little boy suddenly spoke up. So I got more *lechon*, ham, cheese and bread and put them on the table.

"He has not eaten in two days, poor boy," Maria said as Boy dug into the food.

"Not eaten in two days?" I asked incredulous. "Why?"

"Simple. No food," Juan replied.

"She used to earn a little washing clothes," Juan pointed to Maria, "but she got sick. We didn't even have money for her medicine. Luckily, she got well enough to come here."

"I'm so sorry to hear that. But with all that, you looked happy when your arrived."

"Because the President and her economic advisers said the economy has recovered. I remember her words very well. 'Our country is back on the track of sustainable development,' she said. She said she has reversed the nation's fortunes since taking office 11 months ago."

"Is your life better now than it was 11 months ago?"

"It's worse now. But if the President says it's better now, then it must be better. Statistics don't lie; Presidents don't lie."

"Even the Devil can cite the Scriptures," Maria seemed to be a bright woman. "If things are getting better, why don't we have anything to eat?"

"I will quote again the President. She reported that her government was able to meet its 2001 targets, including lower inflation, lower unemployment and less peso speculation."

"Lower unemployment, hmmmph!" harrumphed Maria. "Then why are you and I jobless? And why are prices of what we need going up? Not that we have anything to buy them with."

"It's not only the President who said that. Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas also said so. They must know what they're talking about."

"All I know is that I don't know what we're going to eat in the next few days. Or whether you'll ever find a job again. All their nice words won't put food in the stomach of Boy here."

Taking the cue, Boy raised his plate like Oliver asking for more. "*'Nay, konti pa.*"

His mother spooned all the ham and bread into his plate, then went on. "What they're saying is all a mirage. It's not there. There are no jobs, no food on the table, no hope, nothing. Words are cheap."

"*O, ikaw naman* Maria, *hayan ka na naman*," Juan tried to stop her.

"Don't be a fool, Juan," Maria interrupted. "There are millions of our countrymen who are jobless and with little to eat, and they have the temerity to say that things are better? Maybe it is better for them, but not for us."

"I think we better go," Juan stood up.

By this time, all the food was gone anyway and Boy was happily picking his teeth. So after much burping, I gave them a food basket, some money, and after wishing one another Merry Christmas again, they were on their way.

## 'Tatarin'

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

FIRST off, I take my hat off (even if I don't wear one) to Tikoy Aguiluz for his audacity. Never loath to take risks, Tikoy has taken a cinematic road that, in retrospect, has been exceptionally fraught with peril. His journey has taken him from "Boatman" to his latest project "Tatarin," and in-between to such strange and exotic places as "Rizal Sa Dapitan," "Tatsulok" and "Biyaheng Langit." Most of them huge gambles, in that they challenged not just conventional wisdom about what was commercially viable but conventional foolishness about what was morally acceptable.

"Tatarin" is based on Nick Joaquin's short story, "The Summer Solstice." That has not spared it from attacks from the conservatives, to call them charitably (this is Christmas), many of whom are well ensconced in the Movie and Television Review Classification Board. Fortunately, despite them, reason (or whatever faculty proved the more powerful in this winter solstice) prevailed. "Tatarin" did not get the ax, or X, and so will be shown in the Metro Manila Filmfest in pristine form.

I do hope it does well at the tills. I am particularly curious to see how the ordinary moviegoer will relate to it. The movie is a gamble, notwithstanding Rica Peralejo, because its theme is by no means a simple one. Tikoy would tell me that after he apprised Nick Joaquin of the objection of the conservatives that it was libidinous, Nick would explode and say, "But of course, it is all about *libog*."

Yes, but *libog* in a more complex sense than what merely culminates in bed, or any other explosive location—to go by movies these days, the bed is now the least preferred one. Lupeng and Paeng are a 1920s couple straddling two worlds, the worlds of dark and light, sun and moon, day and night. Which is quite literally the setting of Nick's story: It takes place during the time when the world is equally divided into day and night, light and dark, sun and moon—hence, the title. It is also a time when the sun boils at day and the moon burns at night, which makes for oppressive heat. The characters in the story keep talking about that heat, which gives it all sorts of resonance. Among them, well, *libog*.

Beyond the literal, Lupeng and Paeng straddle the worlds of a Catholic present and a pagan past, a present that extols manhood and a past that worships womanhood, a world of rules and convention and a world of instinct and primal drives. The story tells of Lupeng's descent—or ascent—from the first to the second, a tilting of the weight from the one to the other that restores balance between heaven and earth. This happens during the Tatarin, the Philippine version of a druidic festival or rite, which itself fuses two seemingly contradictory worlds. The Tatarin, a pagan festival, culminates on the feast of St. John, who is not just a resolutely Christian symbol but a thoroughly masculine one. In the end, Paeng, the master, grovels in the dust before his wife, ready to kiss her feet.

I leave the reader to read the original story. He will be richly rewarded.

The challenge to Tikoy and company was turning this short story into a full-blown movie, with full-blown characters and a full-blown plot. The results are mixed, and sometimes a little mixed-up. I like the way they heightened the conflict between husband and wife by turning them into an estranged couple (they are not in the story), wonderfully played by Dina Bonnevie and Edu Manzano. I liked the way they introduced the characters of Micaela (Ces Quesada) and Maggie (Maui Taylor), her daughter, the *balikbayans* from America, which adds another dimension to the story. Paeng, the haughty husband, frowns on the Tatarin as primitive and good only for *indios*, but he himself is regarded as backward and insular by his presumably modernistic *balikbayan* tormentors. And I liked the way they introduced the character of the son as someone who has just crossed to adulthood, suggesting that rites of passage are common in all cultures and times, and one is no less alien, or familiar, than another.

But I wasn't as moved as I expected to be. Ironically, the one thing I found wanting in the movie was the very thing the moralists found excessive, which was the eroticism. *Libog* is not just a lay in the hay, which this movie has more than its share of. In that sense, a movie like "Like Water for Chocolate" or "Chocolat" is more erotic, with its luxurious evocation of food and other earthly delights along with sex. That is what sensuality is all about, the opening of the senses with the discovery of, or plunging into, the rich and finely textured layers of material, or, yes, carnal, life. You can have lots of sex and little eroticism. This unfortunately tends to lie (pun intended) in that direction. It does not offer a visual and tactile feast for you to drown yourself in.

Pinky Amador would tell me later she felt the movie's point of view was largely masculine. I agree. My own reasons for saying so is that it offers a very narrow view of what liberates, or as Mel Gibson's movie puts it, what women want. Lupe's "awakening" gets to be depicted in a very one-dimensional way, as her discovery of her libidinal drives. A point that is reinforced by scenes of several women also being gripped by the same libidinal fever and succumbing to its impregnable (still, pun intended) will in the heat of the moon. I should think the descent, or ascent, to the realm of the senses—to borrow the title of another movie, one that I also thought had lots of sex but little eroticism—would be more emotionally resonant than that. Nick's story suggests so.

These quibbles notwithstanding, or precisely because of them—movies with more ambition deserve more attention—"Tatarin" is infinitely worth seeing. I hope it sparks a debate of some sort not just among those who like to talk of gender issues but among ordinary folk who simply love movies. But more than anything else, I hope the MTRCB members (yet still, pun intended) who would have X-ed it see it again, in secret if necessary.

Who knows? Maybe they too will experience a Tatarin-like awakening.

* * *

*Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com*

# Peacemakers

**COMMENTARY**

*John J. Carroll, S.J.*
Institute on Church and Social Issues

I SEE very few movies, and even fewer remain in my memory. One which has stayed with me for at least two years now is "Once Upon A Midnight Clear," a story, supposedly based on fact, set in the last winter of World War II.

It revolves around a small American patrol posted to watch a road through a forest in Belgium. In the same stretch of forest is a small German patrol.

At one point some of the Americans are down in a valley in deep snow when the Germans appear on the hilltop above, but instead of opening fire on the exposed Americans, they merely wave and move on. Later the Americans discover the farmhouse where the Germans are staying, and from firing positions watch one of the "enemy" go out to fetch water. One American has the German in his sights, but holds his fire. Still later, two Americans on night guard in their foxholes are "attacked" from out of the darkness by snowballs. In the morning they find a message inviting them to meet at midnight at a certain spot.

After reflection the Americans, except for one who is suffering a nervous breakdown, decide to accept the invitation. Coming cautiously and fully armed to the rendezvous, they find the Germans gathered around a small pine tree which they have decorated with candles and ribbons, and they realize that it is Christmas Eve! A German unhooks a hand grenade from his belt and all stiffen; then he hangs it on the tree. Beside it another hangs his pistol. Together they sing Christmas carols, the melodies of which are the same in German and English.

Then the Germans explain that they know the war is over and want to surrender, but in such a way that their families will not be punished. They propose a staged "encounter" in which they will be "captured."

The Americans are afraid of a trap and one of them blurts out "Why should we trust these Nazis?" A German replies, "We are not Nazis. We are just soldiers, like you."

To me that line said it all. It was made more poignant by the fact that the one who was able to bridge the language gap between the two groups was a Jew whose Yiddish was close to German. He never mentioned the millions of his co-religionists who died in German gas chambers.

The story ends in tragedy as the American who had been left out of the plan rushes to the scene of the "encounter" and, thinking it is for real, opens fire. All of the Germans and one of the Americans are killed.

Peace is a fragile thing, built on trust and risk, on respect for the humanity of the other, on forgiveness, and it is always open to failure.

The Gospel of Luke tells us that on the first Christmas the angels announced: "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace to men and women who enjoy His favor." The promise may sound ironic as we look around the world this Christmas season: the smoking ruins of the World Trade Center and of Kabul; the caves of the Taliban; Bethlehem silent after occupation by Israeli tanks; Sri Lanka and Kashmir; Basilan and even Metro Manila.

No more ironic, however, than it must have sounded to St. Luke himself who knew very well that the Lord had known little peace in His public life. Right in his infancy narrative he has Simeon predicting that the child "is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected." The Gospels unhesitatingly describe the opposition that Christ undergoes at the hands of the leaders of the nation and even of his own townmates, His betrayal by a friend, His death on the cross as a criminal. And yet His first words to His apostles after His Resurrection will be: "Peace be with you."

Peace, He seems to be telling us, must be built slowly and painfully, through sacrifice and risk and even failure. And yet, "Happy are the peacemakers; they shall be called sons of God."

As I think of peacemakers, I recall two of my Jesuit brothers, Fr. Bob Walsh, now deceased, and Fr. "Ben" Montecastro who is close to death from cancer. In Zamboanga del Sur during the "troubles" of the 1970s, Bob and Ben together kept night guard on a bridge separating the Christian from the Muslim villages, to prevent Christian irregulars from crossing over to take revenge on Muslims for the murder of Christian fishermen. Later, when there was an encounter and some Muslims were killed, no one would bury their bodies until Bob went out and did it with his own hands. After that he could ride his motorbike up and down the provincial road in perfect safety, despite the Muslims lying in ambush along the way.

Peace is not yet achieved, neither in Zamboanga nor in our world. After recent events we must begin once again to rebuild the edifice on which Bob and Ben and hundreds of others labored, and for which Bishop Benjamin D. de Jesus, OMI, assassinated in front of his cathedral in Jolo, and Fr. Rhoel D. Gallardo, CMF, tortured and killed in Basilan, died.

# A word from Maria's family

**AT LARGE**

*Rina Jimenez-David*

"I LOVE you all so much and am going through the worst times of my life," she wrote in a handwritten note to her father, uncle and sister. "Now my last request before you leave is that we please share these moments as if there were no problems in the world…I've really been through some horrible nightmares since the 6th of June. I want to share a pleasant evening with my very special loved ones. Please try to understand that I am blessed that I have you and would feel worse that my kids don't have someone around for them. I will come to the US….I just have to leave them with peace in my heart. I'm so ashamed at how I keep failing up things in my life, forgive me please."

Maria Teresa Carlson sent this note to her father, uncle and sister Johnna in August last year. A year later, her mother Zenaida and sisters Gidget and Johnna spent a week visiting with Maria. A photo taken during the visit shows the four women, features uncannily similar, smiling at the camera as if with hardly a care in the world.

Is this a portrait of an uncaring family that abandoned a troubled daughter and sister, and left her motherless children to fend for themselves after her death?

Johnna writes that she believes Maria's note reveals "how ashamed she was of 'failing up,' and I think that is why she sometimes distanced herself from us at times out of humiliation." And from the note, too, we can surmise that the only reason that kept Maria from flying off to the United States to join her "very special loved ones" was her children, whom she could not leave to their father unless she felt "peace in my heart."

* * *

**BUT why is it that in the process of seeking to deflect charges that it was his abuse of Maria that led to her suicide last month, Maria's husband Rudy Fariñas has chosen to malign her family?**

**Depicting his late wife as emotionally troubled, Fariñas has said she suffered a traumatic childhood stemming from the fact that she never knew her natural father and was stunned to discover that the man she thought of as her father was in fact her stepfather. And just to "demonstrate" how uncaring her family was, the former governor and congressman claimed many times on national TV that Maria's relatives merely "dropped by" for the funeral and left immediately without a word to Maria's children.**

**He forgets to mention, of course, that the funeral was held in Ilocos Norte, where he certainly wields influence still, and they were virtual strangers in the place.**

**In fact, the Carlson family issued a statement on their arrival here for Maria's burial, but for a brief mention by a television personality, hardly any media outlet carried this statement. Here, then is the statement in full, in justice to a grieving family that must contend with having their memory of Maria tarnished in the process of one man's fruitless expiation of his own guilt.**

* * *

WE (the Carlson family) are very saddened by the loss of our sister/daughter, Maria. We feel inclined to speak publicly to clear any misconceptions of our family who loved her very much.

After many years of abuse, the worst possible thing imaginable had happened. On Nov. 22 we were notified of Maria's tragic death. Without hesitation we flew to the Philippines after receiving the devastating news. Upon our arrival, we began hearing many disparaging and negative comments about our family (including Maria) in the media. This was very disturbing.

Out of love and loyalty for Maria and her children, there was no question as to our attendance to mourn her and say goodbye. We attended Mass services and her funeral. We did not attend the wake at the Fariñas home because we did not feel comfortable being there after knowing all that Maria had been through and because of the negative media reports.

Despite Fariñas' comments, our father John loves Maria as any father would love (his) child. Our mother loves her very much also. Our father was always there to support her, and on multiple occasions, even assisted her when she wanted to leave her abusive relationship. Our parents are hurting tremendously. The pain of losing a child must be more devastating than any other loss. We were always there for Maria, through good times and bad. Although we lived in different countries, our family unit remained strong. We never abandoned her. In fact, about a month ago, our father was assisting her with paperwork to come and visit us in the United States until she changed her mind because of her children.

* * *

**PRIOR to her marriage, Maria was a happy, intelligent, well-adjusted adult with a bright future. We have extremely fond memories of her growing up together. She was always such a joker who made us laugh. Our parents were so very proud of Maria. During her marriage, Maria struggled to persevere through hard times in order to be there for all of her children. Maria's love for her children proved to be her greatest strength as well as her downfall in her effort to overcome a troubled and failed marriage.**

**We would like to thank all of her friends, fans and supporters who have throughout the years given Maria strength and hope. Maria touched so many lives through her loving charm. We wish we could turn back the clock so that we could have been there for her that night. We know that she was crying out for help. There was nothing more that she wanted than to be a good mother to her dear children. Now she can watch over them from Heaven where her soul is at peace and she is not suffering anymore.**

**She is no longer with us but her vibrant spirit lives on in our hearts.**

**MARIA'S LOVING FAMILY—THE CARLSONS**

# Christmas in Rizal's time

**LOOKING BACK**

*Ambeth R. Ocampo*

ONE of the pressures of Christmas is finding column topics for the season and Rizal Day that I have not written about before. During this annual chore, more difficult than Christmas shopping, I always look up a photograph of a letter Jose Rizal wrote his sister Maria from Dapitan on Dec. 18, 1895. At the time, he had no inkling he only had a year to live.

In this short letter in Tagalog, Rizal sent his and Josephine Bracken's Christmas greetings, he had news of common friends, and he asked that his nephew Mauricio Cruz or "Moris" be sent to Dapitan to study under him. Below the letter is a short note that reads:

"*Para Moris en Manila.*

"Aprende mucho porque el que no sabe recibe coscorrones.

"*Te deseo felices Pascuas y buen Año Nuevo.*

(For Moris in Manila. Study well because he who knows little receives *coscorrones*. I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy new Year.)

"*Felices Pascuas, en Ingles*, Merry Christmas.

"*Feliz Año Nuevo*, Happy New Year.

"Moris, you must be a good boy.

"Your uncle J. Rizal"

I used to find this note so heartwarming, until Rizal's grandniece Asuncion Lopez Bantug demonstrated what *coscorrones* was by knocking me sharply on the head with her knuckles. *Aray!* I blurted out as sense was literally knocked into my head. All the while, following the principle of "sounds-like," I presumed *coscorrones* was some Christmas cholesterol special like *chicharones*. What first appeared to be a charming letter from a doting uncle turned into a stern order from a taskmaster. There seemed to be no better translation for *coscorrones* than an actual demonstration of the childhood threat: *Kukutusin kita diyan*!

While Rizal was undoubtedly a good uncle, and the father of this country, we simply cannot imagine him rapping us on the head with his knuckles.

It is just as difficult to imagine what Christmas was like a century ago. Stuck in traffic over the holidays, it dawned on me that those who are 40 and older can remember what Makati looked like when shopping was just ShoeMart, Alemars, Bricktown, Maranao and the Makati Supermarket. Before Quad (now just one part of the Glorietta quadrant), there was only one movie house—Rizal Theater—a modern building with Rizal's trademark signature on the side.

My nieces and students think I am ancient to remember a Makati commercial center so different from today. How would they look at my Jurassic parents who remember Makati as an uninhabited grassy wasteland?

To go beyond living memory, you have to dig up the writings of people who lived a century ago. One of them was an American, Joseph Earle Stevens, who lived in the Philippines from 1893-1895 and wrote a book, "Yesterdays in the Philippines," where I found these lines:

"Christmas Eve, somehow, did not seem natural, though the town was very lively. Some of the shops had brought over evergreen branches from Shanghai to carry out the spirit of the occasion. The streets were crowded with shoppers, everybody was carrying parcels, and if it had been cold, we might have looked for Santa Claus…

"On Christmas Eve took place one of these rather stereotyped feasts, [we] went down in carriages to the big cathedral, that cost a million dollars, inside the walled town [Intramuros], to hear the midnight Mass. Accompanied by a large orchestra, the Mass was more jolly than impressive. The music consisted of polkas, jigs, and minuets, and everybody walked around the great building talking and smiling most gracefully. A few of the really devout sat in a small enclosed space in the center of the church, but they found it hard to keep awake, their eyes were red with weeping, not for the sins of an evil world, but from opening and shutting their jaws in a series of yawns.

"Just before the hour of midnight, comparative quiet ensued with the reading of a solemn prayer or two, but just as the most reverend father, who was conducting the ceremonies, finished bowing behind the high gold and velvet collars to his glittering gown, thirteen bells wagged their tongues that broke up the stillness of the midnight and everybody wished everybody else *Felices Pascuas* (Merry Christmas!). The organ tuned up, the boy choir sang itself red, white and blue, the priestly assistants swung the censers until the church was heavy with fragrance, and all of those who had nothing else to do yawned and wished they were in bed.

"After staying a little longer, our party left, and went over to the Jesuit church nearby, where a very good orchestra seemed to be playing a Virginia reel. Here were similar ceremonies modified somewhat to suit the rather different requirements of the Order, and after staying long enough not to appear as intruding spectators, we made our exit.

"And now that Christmas is all over, everybody seems to be wearing a new hat, the most appropriate present that can be given in this land of sun strokes and fevered brows."

Filipinos don't wear hats anymore, but then as now there is music at Mass and people outside the church walking, talking and being merry. Some things never change, and one wonders whether that is good or bad. But then Christmas is not a time for depressing reflections. We leave that for the rest of the year.

* * *

*Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph*

# Alone but not lonely

**HIGH BLOOD**

*Cecinia L. Vallejera*

*WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves.* —**Ed.**

TODAY, the last bird left the nest. I was a bit worried that it would not be able to spread its wings well enough and fly safely to where it should be going. Ah, the swiftness of time strikes me like lightning. Just 27 years ago, I was caring for it like my life depended on it. I made sure it was not hungry and I sang it lullabies to send it to sleep.

Yes, that was two decades and seven years ago. And today, Nanie, my youngest daughter bade goodbye. Her family has moved to their new house about four blocks away. Surely, I will miss my two cute and naughty granddaughters who have kept me company for the past four years. The children's laughter will always linger in every nook and cranny of our house. How could I forget 4-year-old Bianca, who always kept me company in bed? I will always fondly remember one year old Sofia who mischievously poked her finger into my nose whenever I fell asleep on the couch.

I wish my husband were still around to keep me company in this stage of my life when I am struggling against creeping old age and despair. He passed away when the children were barely in college. He was a good husband and father, and I will always have special memories of him.

Like a sailor with nothing but raw courage and determination, I managed to keep the boat sailing until we reached the shore. It was not easy raising a family alone, but because of the unwavering support and inspiration my children gave me, I somehow made it.

The first to leave the nest was Imelda, my middle-born daughter. Elmo asked for her hand when she was 27, and with hardly a whimper of protest, I agreed. They were both gainfully employed and in love, so I found no reason to stand in their way. Out of their love came Daelson, my 3-year-old *apo* who has never ceased to amuse me.

Then came my eldest son's turn to go. He did not leave home to marry, but to seek greener pastures abroad. Until now, at 33, he is still a bachelor, brimming with zest and energy.

Nanie, my youngest, has a most peculiar way of getting entangled in the intricacies of life. Both unprepared for married life and parenthood, she and her husband Rene tied the knot, blind to the harsh realities ahead of them. At the young age of 22, she had her first bitter taste of how it felt to wake up at 3 a.m. to breastfeed the baby and wash tons of soiled diapers, while at the same time working on her undergraduate thesis. Without anybody knowing it, I cried for her a lot but I knew that it was the only way both of them would learn to be responsible for the consequences of their actions.

Sure enough, after almost four years, their struggles paid off and they landed stable jobs. They then decided to build a house upon which they can found their own home.

I will be living alone starting today. Though Imelda and Nanie have promised to pay me regular visits and spend the weekends with me together with their families, still those visits will be brief and I know that I will be alone again. My eldest son, Panfilo Jr., often calls me but I know that after we hang up the phone, I will be alone again.

Nevertheless I am not bothered by the solitary life I will be living. I may be alone, but I will not be lonely. The countless memories that we have shared in this house, both good and bad, will keep me company through the years. The insights I have gained from the wonderful experience of rearing my children will continue to stir me in my waking moments. And the fact that I will remain a parent for as long as my children need me will surely keep me preoccupied.

From here, I will continue the journey of finding myself, for it is in being alone that people find their true selves.

*Cecinia L. Vallejera, 62, works as a rural health midwife in Palo, Leyte and plans to retire next year.*

# Not alone, but lonely

**YOUNGBLOOD**

*Nanie Vallejera-Ragay*

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.*—**Ed.**

IT took some time for my husband and me to summon the courage to inform my mother that we had decided to build our own house, which would be our home for the next 50 years or so. I found it difficult to control the lump in my throat as I thanked her for the many years that she had unconditionally cared for us. Rene and I thanked her for supporting us and giving us shelter as we struggled to support our family by ourselves. We likewise apologized to her for the many shortcomings we had, and somehow she understood.

With her blessings, off we flew to our new abode about four blocks away, totally unsure and uncertain of what lay ahead.

Today, we will start living as a family. We have our fears and apprehensions of the many things that may come our way and which we may not be able to handle altogether. For sure, there will be bills to pay—for electricity, water, cable TV, telephone, monthly lot amortization, the list goes on and on. Then there will be the daily planning of meals. What shall we have for breakfast? For lunch? For supper? Some of our friends are coming over for dinner tonight. Will I be able to cook the pasta right? Will the condiments for the *escabeche* earn the family's approval?

For four years, we lived a hassle-free life. We didn't have to mind the bills, for Mommy always paid for them. She paid even for the minor repairs when the faucet was leaking or the florescent lamp in the living room was not functioning. In the morning, we would wake up to a sumptuous breakfast of scrambled eggs and fried ham with matching *tsokolate*. Similarly, lunch and supper would always be ready for us to partake of.

When the children's *yaya* was down with an occasional flu, mother would take a day off from the office to take care of her *apos*. Bringing them to and from school was no bother either. She would volunteer to take them there and get them back at lunchtime. At the end of the day when my husband and I would return from work, the children were already fed, bathed and helped with their lessons and assignments.

All these we will be missing starting today. From this day, we will learn to do things by ourselves. We will learn how to check the kitchen cupboard regularly to see if there is still rice, salt, eggs, noodles, canned goods, etc. We will learn how to plan our meals ourselves, and we will hear Mana Lani, our dear house help, tell us that the gas tank is already empty and needs to be refilled. (Whew! That's a prohibitive P280!) Of course, Rene and I will also learn how it feels to know we only have P100 and payday is still a week away.

We will not be alone in our new home, my husband, my two daughters and I. And yet, we are lonely because we will be missing the easy life we have been living. We will miss the pampering we got from my Mommy. We will be missing the instant spaghetti she used to serve us while we were watching TV. My children will surely miss their *lola's pasalubong* of Magnolia Chocolait and Nova. But most of all, we will be missing Mommy who has spent almost two-thirds of her life raising us with unwavering love and commitment and molding us into useful and productive citizens of our community.

*Nanie Vallejera-Ragay, 27, is a non-commissioned police officer assigned to the Police-Community Relations Division of Regional Office 8 where she works as a writer/trainer.*

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# When does the Filipino lose his honesty?

AFTER COMING home from my short visit to my native land in September last year, this little demon in my head has been nagging me to write something about what I saw during one of my early morning walks in the subdivision where I stayed in San Pedro, Laguna.

I told this little demon in my head, "Let's wait." I thought I'd just keep my eyes open, hoping that one of these days I'd read about it in the INQUIRER or in the other papers, on the Web. To my disappointment, after more than a year of waiting, no one has written about it at all. No one.

What was it that caused me many sleepless nights? It was a basketball game. Yes, a simple basketball game played by the youth of my native land, the beautiful Philippines. The game I watched was nothing in terms of importance compared to the exposé of Chavit Singson that the Manila newspapers headlined that day. Except to me.

What fascinated me about this basketball game was not the tattered shirts and worn-out sandals some boys were wearing or the uniforms some other kids had on their back announcing the exclusive schools they were attending. It was not even the skills they displayed, in spite of their height handicap. It was the fact that they were playing without a referee.

The absence of a referee didn't matter. If the ball was tipped out of bounds, it was immediately acknowledged by the guilty team and possession was awarded to the opposing team. If a player committed a foul, he right away raised his hand to admit the infraction. Scores were kept and the rules of the game strictly observed. An honest system, absolutely.

When the game was over, one of the boys who was in his mid teens sat beside me wiping his perspiration. I told him, "Son, I was very impressed by the way you boys played."

He answered me in a somewhat deprecating manner, saying they were not really that good. They were practicing for a coming tournament which would be graced by the presence of the provincial governor.

"Do you always play this way, without a referee, during practice games?" I asked him.

"Yes sir" he said. "That's how we play it during practice games, and not only here but in almost every village where basketball is played."

The boy's humility and honesty struck me and I found myself temporarily speechless, head bowed, tears swelling in my eyes. The boy nudged me and asked, "Are you okay sir?"

"I'm okay son, I'm okay," I assured him.

That was the thing the little demon in my head wanted me to write about. For in that very moment, after having been away from my native land for almost three decades, I was made to realize of the honesty of the Filipino youth.

If the Filipino youth can play basketball without a referee, he can play the more serious games in life straight. The sense of honesty imbued by that sport in him he can retain through adulthood. I see no reason why it cannot be.

What baffles me is the inability of his adult counterpart to play the serious games in life straight. His inability to acknowledge when the ball is out of bounds. His inability to raise his hand when he commits an infraction against the rules of society. He would rather ask, "Where's the evidence?" or protest, "My conscience is clear." These are the things we have been hearing again and again since the dreadful days of martial law.

Is it because the stakes in adult games are so high? But whether the stakes are high or not, we are supposed to play by the rules.

At what stage in his life does the Filipino adult lose the honesty of his youth? At what point does this unacceptable transition occur?

More than a century ago, that Pride of the Malay Race, whose death anniversary will be celebrated on Dec. 30, through the lips of Tasio, the philosopher, said: "Our men are active only for vice and heroic only in shame. Childhood awakens in darkness and routine, youth lives its best years without an ideal. And the mature, sterile, only serves to corrupt youth with his example."

Our society is deteriorating so fast. The very survival of the country is threatened by the carelessness of the Filipino adult. We can no longer afford to ignore the Filipino youth. If we nurture that honesty in our youth now, we will have honest, mature Filipinos in the coming generations, the only hope we have for a better Philippines.—**CECIL PERALTA, ceperal@hotmail.com**

## LETTERS

### Tricycles on Katipunan Avenue

HAVE you ever seen the signs saying "Tricycles Prohibited" along Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City? How come this is being violated every day? I see this happening every time I go to school.

This concerns me a lot. The tricycle drivers are endangering not only their own lives but also the lives of their passengers. Just as bad, they do this with the consent of our very efficient traffic aides. Once I was even stopped so as to give way for two tricycles! I don't know how much they are paid for their tolerance, but I'm sure they get something for it.

Can you imagine a car traveling at 80 kilometers per hour and colliding with a tricycle with three passengers plus its driver? The result would be very disastrous, right?—**TIMOTHY JOSEPH NAVARRO, Filinvest, Antipolo, Rizal**

### A pretext to intensify repression

RECENT newspaper headlines remind us of the witch-hunting days of the Marcos regime. The inclusion of the New People's Army (NPA) in the United States' list of terrorists is a pretext for intensified suppression in both the cities and countryside.

With the worsening global and domestic economic crisis, the Macapagal administration has become more desperate in holding on to power by suppressing the opposition and political unrest, particularly that led by the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed group, the NPA.

The United States also dares to include in its list of terrorists open and legal people's organizations, which it links to the Left and the abovementioned leftist groups, so as to completely pacify any dissidents that could bring down the already shaky Macapagal administration.

The administration recognizes that it has a weak political foundation, even if it was installed by a people's uprising earlier this year. With no strong political party, the administration can only rely on military and US government backing to be able to remain in power for the rest of its term.

The United States and the Macapagal administration brand "leftist" organizations as terrorists only to justify more repressive policies such as the National ID System and anti-terrorism laws. Open and legal people's organizations are not spared from the list of "terrorists." The democratic open mass movement of the people is now more vulnerable to direct fascist attacks.

More significantly, with the all-out support given by the Macapagal administration to the US-led war against "international terrorism," the United States assumes blanket authority to launch its war of aggression in the Philippines, a more blatant US military intervention in the internal affairs of the country.

The inclusion of the NPA in the terrorist list is not only an affront to the right to revolt (in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights); it also serves to justify further suppression of democratic and civil rights as well as intensified militarization of the countryside.

The blanket authority given to the United States by the Macapagal administration to interfere in our internal affairs and conflicts is also a direct violation of and an insult to our national sovereignty.

The Filipino people who just overthrew the fascist and repressive regime of Joseph Estrada cannot be easily fooled. We cannot allow any US military intrusion, and we are ready to defend our democratic rights from the militarist regime of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.—**APOLINARIO ALVAREZ, secretary general, Anakbayan, 1316 San Perfecto St., Sampaloc, Manila**

### A sneaky thing for Philpost to do

THE IMPLEMENTATION of the 50-percent increase in foreign postage rates starting Dec. 1 was a sneaky and despicable thing to do. No notice was given to warn the public of an impending increase. Even the Regional Post Office Administration here in Cebu only received a notice of the increase last Nov. 28. So it had only one day to notify the public, and it didn't do it.

When I asked postal employees about this unannounced increase, I was referred to four different offices because no one seemed to know about it. When I finally got to the office of the regional director, who was out of town, I got to talk to Franklin Lachica who confirmed that their office had only been notified about the increase last Nov. 28 and that it was to be implemented immediately.

When I asked about the possibility of granting a grace period so the public could be informed, he said there was nothing they could do. It seems nobody in Cebu has the authority to even call Manila and ask about the possibility of a delay in imposing the new rates so people could be properly informed and adjust to such a big increase.

I think it is outrageous for a government institution to increase its fees by 50 percent without informing the public about it. One postal employee in Cebu said news about the increase was published in the Manila Bulletin some time ago. But how about people in Cebu? What notice was given here? How about giving advance notices in the post offices?

My foreign Christmas mail had been ready for 10 days but I was holding it so it would not arrive too early. I planned on sending it to the post office on Nov. 30, forgetting that it was a holiday. I then wanted to put my mail in a drop box so it could still beat the deadline, but there are no outside mailboxes at the post office.

Now I am told it will cost me P700 more to mail my Christmas cards around the world. I feel like I am being ripped off. If it were a private company doing this, I would decide never to do business with them again. But for a government (dis)service like carrying mail, one has hardly any alternative. And I do not even have a name or number to call in Manila to register my complaint.

I don't argue with the need to increase postal rates (although a 50-percent increase is much too steep) but I certainly denounce the way the increase was implemented without prior public announcement.—**NAME WITHHELD ON REQUEST**

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# RP must tap new markets for labor –Sto. Tomas

By B. Rivera

LABOR Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas has stressed the need to develop potential markets for Filipino workers, whose remittances form a large chunk of the country's dollar reserves.

Sto. Tomas said the Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (Polo) should be "sensitive" to the demands in other countries in order to promote employment opportunities for OFWs.

In her speech before labor attaches in Manila last week, Sto. Tomas tasked some 30 labor attaches in attendance to take advantage of the growing demand for high-end skilled workers.

Sto. Tomas also warned against any unscrupulous acts or neglect by labor officials so as not to taint the integrity and professionalism of the Philippine government.

She said it was important for the staff of the Polo to be reliable and credible enough to effectively promote OFW market and strengthen OFW welfare in other countries.

Registered OFWs number around 7 million all over the world and account for at least $7 billion in annual remittances, which are vital to cushion the impact of economic recession in the country.

The Macapagal administration seeks to deploy one million Filipinos abroad every year to cushion the impact of unemployment here because of the economic problems.

Congress recently approved a P4.9 billion budget for the Department of Labor and Employment, an increase of P105 million from last year's allocation for the department.

Sto. Tomas said the additional P105 million would be used mainly for the promotion of new OFW markets and OFW welfare. A small portion will also be spent to develop the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

She also announced that doctors and social workers would soon form part of the Polo to deliver much-needed medical services to overseas Filipino workers.

Sto. Tomas said in a statement that the DOLE would deploy for the first time at least 10 Filipino doctors and social workers abroad to address the needs of OFWs.

The Labor chief said the deployment, which will start next year, would bolster aid to Filipinos working abroad who tend to suffer from various kinds of ailment due to fatigue and maltreatment.

The doctors and social workers will be given a rank equivalent to a labor attache and will be recommended by the Department of Health, Sto. Tomas said in a statement.

She did not name the countries that would be given priority by the DOLE in the assignment of medical and social experts, but these would be those that have a large population of OFWs.

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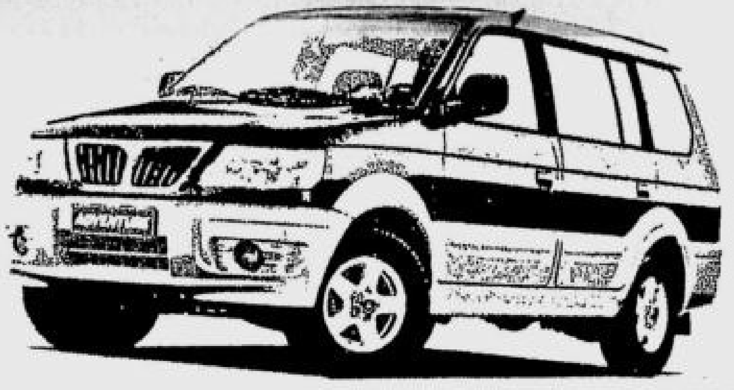

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| Gas A/T | 745,000 | 370,000 | 12,739 | 9,301 |
| GLS Diesel M/T | 725,000 | 360,000 | 12,395 | 9,049 |
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# The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

# Xmas without goodwill in Mideast

**BETHLEHEM, West Bank—Hopes for peace in the Holy Land seemed as empty as Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's seat at Bethlehem's midnight Mass after Israel barred his Christmas pilgrimage to the town where Jesus was born.**

Showing no goodwill toward a man it branded "irrelevant," Israel ignored international appeals—including one from the Vatican—to lift the ban, and demanded Arafat first arrest Palestinian militants who killed an Israeli cabinet minister.

Bethlehem, rocked by 15 months of Israeli-Palestinian violence that has turned tourism into a ghost of Christmas-past, again celebrated the holiday in a somber mood with Israeli troops parked just outside town.

"It is wonderful to be here with the underdogs," said Deirdre, an Irish woman among a scattering of foreign pilgrims who braved Israeli checkpoints, or winding dirt roads that circumvent them, to reach Bethlehem.

Saying his "heart is heavy with sorrow," Arafat told the Palestinian people in a televised speech from the West Bank city of Ramallah that Israel had committed a crime by preventing a "believer in God and peace" from travelling to Bethlehem.

Arafat has been stranded in Ramallah since Israel destroyed his helicopters in the Gaza Strip, stationed tanks near his Ramallah office and launched air strikes against symbols of his power in retaliation for suicide attacks earlier this month.

He had attended midnight Mass in Bethlehem's Roman Catholic Saint Catherine's Church, adjoining the Church of the Nativity, since the town came under Palestinian rule in 1995.

This year, a checkered Arab headdress, a symbol of Arafat's struggle for a homeland, was draped over his empty seat, marked by a sign in English reading: "H.E. Yasser Arafat, President of the State of Palestine."

In his midnight Mass sermon, Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah, the Catholic Church's senior representative to the Holy Land, said that despite Arafat's absence he was closer to the Palestinians than at any other time. *AFP*

**AN EMPTY** chair on the front row has a checkered keffiyeh headdress draped across it, symbolizing Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's absence during midnight Mass at St. Catherine's Church in Bethlehem. AFP

## Families of Sept. 11 victims forgo Christmas dinners while they mourn

NEWARK, New Jersey—Nikki Stern didn't send out any Christmas cards this year. She wasn't ready to just sign her own name.

Stern, whose husband, James Potorti, died in the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, also won't be visiting her in-laws in North Carolina for the holidays this year. She opted instead to stay with cousins in California.

"If I went down by myself, they'd really notice if he wasn't there," said Stern, of Plainsboro, New Jersey.

Many Americans who did not lose loved ones in the terrorist attacks are turning to the holidays as a welcome distraction from unsettled times. But celebrating is the last thing on the minds of families who are just beginning to grieve.

In Glen Rock, New Jersey, Courtney Acquaviva has put up a Christmas tree, bought gifts for the whole family and decorated her house for the holidays, all while getting ready to give birth to her second child. Acquaviva, 30, lost her husband, Paul, 29, a trader at Cantor Fitzgerald, on Sept. 11.

"It's for the kids," said Courtney's mother, Nancy Seitz. "She wants it to be the way Paul would have wanted it."

"This is like yesterday. They're still in shock," said Alan Wolfelt, a psychologist who has written more than 20 books on grief.

He said victims' families would have trouble relating to the festive atmosphere around them because it was so early in their mourning process.

"Intellectually, they understand it, but emotionally it just doesn't seem right," said Wolfelt, who directs the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Some families have decided to pretend the holidays aren't happening.

"I just can't think about it right now," said Rose Zangrilli through tears. Her 36-year-old son, Mark, was killed in the World Trade Center. The Zangrillis said they might spend the day with their grandchildren, but haven't put up a Christmas tree or had time to think about gifts.

For others, traditions are being modified. Ginny Bauer, 45, of Rumson, New Jersey, usually cooks a turkey dinner for 25 on Christmas Day. This year, three months after her husband of 21 years, David, was killed, she and her three children will go to a cousin's home.

"My kids understand that we are just going to be very quiet this year," she said. "We're basically just doing the bare minimum." *AP*

## Israeli killed, 3 wounded in shooting along Jordan border

JERUSALEM—Israeli tanks and troops entered Palestinian-controlled territory in the West Bank early Tuesday and arrested seven suspected militants before withdrawing.

The incursion came hours after Palestinians held a Midnight Mass in the West Bank town of Bethlehem without Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat after Israel forbade him from attending the services.

Early Tuesday, Israeli troops crossed the border with Jordan in pursuit of gunmen who shot and killed one Israeli and injured three others, one seriously, military officials said. Initially, shots were fired across the border and an intense exchange of fire broke out as troops crossed the border fence.

The Army confirmed one Israeli had been killed but said troops were not located inside Jordanian territory. Jordanian authorities did not immediately comment on the border incident.

As part of efforts to end the 15 months of Israeli-Palestinian fighting, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Ahmed Qureia, a key lieutenant of Arafat, are conducting talks aimed at a renewal of stalled peace talks, Israel confirmed Monday.

Palestinian officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, have said the new proposals discussed by Peres and Qureia included a ceasefire followed within eight weeks by recognition of a Palestinian state in existing autonomy zones, which make up about 42 percent of the West Bank and two-thirds of the Gaza Strip.

The remaining issues—expanded borders, Jewish settlements, Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees—would be negotiated over the next year, and implemented within two years, the officials said.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's office denied newspaper reports about the proposals.

On Monday, a statement issued jointly by Peres and Sharon said talks were being held to "bring about an end to the terror, violence and incitement in order to allow progress to be made in the diplomatic process."

The statement emphasized that the talks have been taking place with the knowledge of Sharon, who has said he will not negotiate while violence persists. *AP*

## Afghan warlord gets key Cabinet position

DOSTAM

KABUL—Afghanistan's new leader welcomed tough Uzbek ethnic warlord Abdul Rashid Dostam into his government, as Afghan forces arrested eight suspected supporters of top terror suspect Osama bin Laden.

Hamid Karzai's new government also backed Pentagon claims that a deadly US air raid last week blasted a convoy carrying members of Bin Laden's al-Qaida network, after reports said it contained only ethnic chiefs and tribal leaders.

Just two days after Karzai took office at the head of an interim power-sharing cabinet, he met Dostam on Monday and offered him the job of deputy defense minister, despite the Uzbek's criticisms of the first post-Taliban administration.

Dostam, who commands a powerful military force based at the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif, had voiced dissatisfaction with the Bonn agreement, which set up Karzai's government.

The veteran general, a ruthless commander, said he had his own political ambitions once Karzai's six-month mandate expires and a traditional assembly or loya jirga convenes to map out the nation's future.

"After six months there will be a loya jirga—I will listen to the wishes of my people but there will be a constitution and law in Afghanistan," Dostam said. "If peace comes to Afghanistan, I want to enter the political movement."

Prior to the decisive meeting with Karzai, Dostam said he supported Afghanistan's new leader but wanted tens of thousands of his own fighters incorporated in a future national army.

In the southern city of Kandahar, Afghan forces stormed a hospital and arrested eight suspected al-Qaida members after a brief exchange of gunfire.

Twelve Arabs, believed to be al-Qaida members, were admitted to Mirwais Hospital in Kandahar before the departure of the Taliban militia from the city earlier this month.

"These Arabs had been a problem for us. They were threatening to blow up the room in which they were admitted if any attempt was made to arrest them," Jan said.

"They had also warned they would not allow any foreigner to interrogate them."

Border Affairs Minister Amanullah Zadram said four al-Qaida troops were killed in Thursday's disputed bombardment of a convoy by US warplanes that left 65 people dead.

Locals had insisted the raid hit tribal elders, mujahedin fighters and others en route to Karzai's inauguration, but Zadram corroborated US claims that US pilots had come under fire. *AFP*

## Russian journalist sentenced to 4 years in prison for treason

VADIVOSTOK, Russia—A military court in Russia's Pacific port of Vladivostok sentenced military journalist Grigory Pasko on Tuesday to four years in a maximum security prison for treason in the form of espionage and stripped him of his military rank.

Pasko had been accused of divulging state secrets on the combat-readiness of Russia's Pacific Fleet to Japanese media. But the court found Pasko guilty of illegally attending a secret meeting of commanders of the Russian Pacific Fleet in 1997, where officers discussed the results of tactical naval maneuvers, and possessing notes that he made there. Judge Dmitry Kuvshinnikov dismissed four other counts of the indictment, saying they were unsubstantiated.

Pasko, who already spent 20 months pending an earlier trial on treason charges, will have to serve the remaining 28 months, Kuvshinnikov said.

"The essence of the sentence is absolutely incomprehensible to me, especially the part concerning my guilt," Pasko told the court.

Pasko was handcuffed and put under arrest in the courtroom immediately after the sentencing. He kissed his wife Galina Morozova before being whisked away by two armed policemen.

Defense lawyer Anatoly Pyshkin said the defense would have to consult with Pasko on whether to appeal.

"I think the verdict doesn't have the right to exist," Pyshkin said. Appeals can be made to the Military Collegium of the Russian Supreme Court within seven days of the verdict.

Pasko was arrested in 1997. He was acquitted in 1999 of treason charges but found guilty on lesser charges of abuse of office. Pasko appealed the verdict seeking a full acquittal, and prosecutors also appealed. Russia's Supreme Court sent the case back to trial in Vladivostok with a different judge.

Pasko and his supporters maintain the charges are retribution for his reports of alleged environmental abuses by the Navy, including dumping radioactive waste into the sea.

Prosecutors had demanded a nine-year sentence - three years less than the minimum for high treason. The prosecution also demanded that Pasko be stripped of his rank of captain, second-rank. *AP*

## Unidentified men murder Nigeria's justice minister

LAGOS, Nigeria—Nigeria's president deployed troops Monday to defuse mounting political tension in the country's southwest after his justice minister was killed.

The slain justice minister, Bola Ige, 71, who was also the country's attorney general, was one of the most outspoken campaigners for democracy under Nigeria's former military rulers.

He died of a shot to the chest Sunday after several assailants broke into his home in the city of Ibadan in southwestern Osun State, government officials and family members said Monday. The motive was not immediately clear.

President Olusegun Obasanjo canceled a trip to Zimbabwe and called an emergency Cabinet meeting. His spokesperson issued a statement saying "no effort will be spared" to end Nigeria's "culture of violence in politics."

Later Monday, the president ordered army troops into the streets of Osun state amid fears of violence, and state television announced a dawn-to-dusk curfew in the state. *AP*

## WORLDBRIEFS

### First work plan

BUENOS AIRES—Tens of thousands of Argentines hoped to get a job for Christmas as the new government of the recession-ravaged country unveiled an ambitious public works program. The program, which promises to create 100,000 jobs in a week, and one million eventually, is just one of several emergency measures that new interim President Adolfo Rodriguez Saa hopes will revive Argentina's lifeless economy. The first 24,000 new jobs in Buenos Aires province and three others were expected to be announced Tuesday, ranging from posts in the armed forces to forestry work and other public services. With the economy crippled by a four-year slump, unemployment has spiraled to a near-record high of more than 18 percent. Simmering discontent with the economy last week erupted in the country's most violent street protests in a decade that forced the government of President Fernando de la Rua to resign. *AP*

### Train accident

JAKARTA—Two trains packed with holiday travelers collided on the Indonesian island of Java early Tuesday, killing at least 30 people, authorities said. A TV report said at least 42 were dead. The 4:30 a.m. crash occurred near the town of Brebes in central Java, about 270 km east of Jakarta. The two trains—one traveling east toward the city of Yogjakarta and the other headed west to the capital—rammed into each other in the town's railway station. Two carriages had derailed. Many passengers smashed windows to escape the wreckage. Train officials estimated more than 1,200 passengers were on each train. "We are having trouble handling this accident," said Nur Aena, a nurse at the local hospital in Brebes. "Three hospitals are now taking in the wounded." *AP*

### Bush fires

SYDNEY—About 2,000 firefighters put Christmas celebrations on hold Tuesday as they continued to battle 70 bush fires burning across Australia's most populous state. Fueled by tinder-dry conditions, the blazes in some regions of New South Wales were expected to worsen later Tuesday as winds pick up and temperatures soar to above 35 degrees Celsius, Rural Fire Service spokesman John Winter said. "They (the firefighters) will probably have spot fires caused by the winds that will jump the containment lines and we'll have new fires as well, there's no doubt about that," he said. Bush fire emergencies have been declared across the state, including in the Hunter Valley wine growing region north of Sydney, and along the east coast. *AP*

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# Across the NATION

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## WEATHER FORECAST

**FORECAST:** Mindanao will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers particularly in the eastern section.

SOURCE: PAGASA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Metro Manila** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 31° Lo 22° |
| **Baguio** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 20° Lo 12° |
| **Tuguegarao** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 25° Lo 16° |
| **Laoag** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 28° Lo 21° |
| **Clark Zone** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 31° Lo 21° |
| **Tagaytay** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 29° Lo 17° |
| **Legazpi** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 27° Lo 22° |
| **Calapan** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 27° Lo 19° |
| **Bacolod** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 30° Lo 23° |
| **Roxas** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 28° Lo 24° |
| **Cebu** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 30° Lo 24° |
| **Tacloban** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 28° Lo 24° |
| **Gen. Santos** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 34° Lo 24° |
| **Zamboanga** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 32° Lo 24° |
| **Cagayan de Oro** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 31° Lo 27° |
| **Davao** | Partly Cloudy | Hi 32° Lo 24° |

Compiled by: Chona Galang, PDI Research/12/26/01

# Tragedy befalls family on eve of Christmas

By JHUNNEX NAPALLACAN
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

CEBU CITY—A couple and their six-year-old daughter, who came from a party, were in a hurry to get home so they could be at their house for the Christmas revelry. But they never got there.

The car that they were riding in rammed into a water tanker at about 11:45 p.m. of Christmas Eve along V. Rama Avenue. The mother died while her husband, daughter and sister were injured.

Hilda Lapinig, 34, of Barangay Basak, was pronounced dead on arrival by doctors at the Don Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (VSMMC).

Dr. Gil Macato, medico-legal officer of the National Bureau of Investigation who conducted the autopsy, said Hilda died of traumatic head injuries.

Hilda, who was in the car's front seat, slammed her head into the car's windshield when the accident happened.

Her husband Mike, who was driving the car, was transferred from the VSMMC to the Cebu Doctor's Hospital where he underwent surgery for a cut in his jaw.

Mike, 36, was transferred yesterday from the intensive care unit to a private room.

Her daughter Michelle and sister-in-law Annabelle Taghoy, 28, who was also the girl's nanny, were also out of danger. Both shared a room at the CDH.

Michelle had a fractured left leg and cuts in her face and other parts of the body. Taghoy suffered bruises in her head and forehead.

Teresita Lapinig, a relative, said Michelle kept on crying, asking where her mother was.

Reports from the Cebu City Traffic Operation Center said the Lapinig family came from a Christmas party at the Capitol Site. They were hurrying to get home so they could celebrate Christmas in their house in Barangay Basak in this city.

PO3 Porferio Lim, traffic investigator, said the family vehicle, a gray Toyota Corolla, was cruising along V. Rama Avenue when an approaching Isuzu Water Tanker of Uy Masuy Wine Factory suddenly encroached their lane.

The car rammed into the left front portion of the truck. The truck driver, Cornelio Abello, 39, surrendered to the police and was later detained in a police station in Barangay Guadalupe this city.

Lim said Abello was drunk based on the results of a liquor test conducted on him.

He said Abello admitted trying to overtake a vehicle in front of him, about the same time when the car was also attempting to overtake another vehicle.

But Lim said the tire marks showed that the truck had encroached the lane of the car.

Abello, he said, would be charged with reckless imprudence resulting to homicide and multiple physical injuries.

# Anti-firecracker bid working–DOH

By THE PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

**CEBU CITY—The staff of various state-run hospitals in key cities in the Visayas heaved a sigh of relief as their emergency rooms received only a few cases of blast injuries during the Christmas revelry.**

Thirty-five firecracker blast victims were reported in Metro Cebu (30), Iloilo City, (2), Dumaguete (1), Bacolod City, (1) and Iloilo province (1).

Four hospitals in Tacloban City, Leyte had not received even a single firecracker blast victim during Christmas Day.

In Bohol, a stray bullet incident marred what was otherwise a peaceful celebration of Christmas Eve.

Health authorities noted a decline in the number of blast victims compared to last year's.

In Metro Cebu alone, two persons were hit by stray bullets while 42 others, mostly children, were treated for firecracker blast injuries in various hospitals on Christmas Eve last year.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit attributed the decline to two reasons—the prevailing economic crisis and the intensified information campaign on the danger brought by firecrackers.

He told radio station dyLA yesterday that most people could not afford to buy firecrackers because of economic difficulties.

Dayrit said the decline could also be an indication that the people were more aware of the risks involved in using firecrackers.

The Department of Health has asked the public to support "Oplan Iwas Paputok," a national campaign to welcome Christmas and the New Year without injuries from firecracker explosions.

But Dayrit said he could not make any definite conclusions because the country has yet to celebrate the New Year.

At least 30 persons were treated for firecracker blast injuries in different hospitals in Metro Cebu.

The city-run Cebu City Medical Center received 13 cases, including 86-year-old grandmother Elisa Sta. Ynez who suffered burn injuries in the right leg and stomach after a boy suddenly threw a firecracker at her.

The government-run Don Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center had 12 cases; four cases in two hospitals in Mandaue City; one in Lapulapu City.

In Iloilo City, six-year-old Ernie Sevilla of Pavia town was the lone firecracker blast victim being attended to at the Western Visayas Medical Center.

Sevilla, of Pavia town, suffered a superficial burn in his face from a firecracker blast.

The Western Visayas State University Hospital also had a single firecracker blast victim—Ralph Guay, 19, from Leganes town, who wounded his right hand in a firecracker explosion.

At Barotac Viejo Municipal Hospital, Nathaniel Laureo, 8, of Banate town, got his right middle finger burned from the explosion of firecrackers.

In Bohol, the police were trying to trace the owner of a stray bullet that hit Reynaldo Rejas, 34, and a resident of Calceta St., Tagbilaran City.

A slug fired from a .45-caliber pistol pierced the roof of Rejas' house and grazed the top of his head, said Supt. Louie Oppus, Tagbilaran police chief.

He said the slug, which was recovered from a pillow inside the victim's room, would be subjected to a ballistic test.

Oppus, however, admitted difficulty in looking for the gun and its owner. ***Jhunnex Napallacan, Carla P. Gomez, Romy G. Amarado, Ma. Diosa Labiste, Chito A. Fuentes and Cynthia A. Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau***

# 3,000 rally to condemn killing of 'aleem'

MARAWI CITY—Members of various Islamic organizations in Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte held a rally here Saturday to protest the killing recently of a Muslim priest.

About 3,000 Muslims denounced the killing of Aleem Hussein Marangit who was gunned down outside a mosque in Disomangcop Village at about 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 14, two days before the end of Ramadan.

The protest action, spearheaded by the League of Ulama in the Philippines, Marawi Chapter, has asked the government to work for the early resolution of the case.

The protesters also demanded that Islamic laws be applied to the suspects in the killing. Under Islamic laws, the killers may be executed by firing squad.

Aleem Mohammad Salih Usman of the Islamic Foundation of Marawi, said the murder of one of their religious leaders was an act of religious persecution tantamount to killing a hundred Muslims.

The protesters have also sought the help of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front for the apprehension of the suspects.

Authorities have already identified the suspects, but would not publicly identify them until they are apprehended.

Marangit was a Muslim missionary who finished his education in Libya and was the director of a madrasah (Islamic school) in Marantao, Lanao del Sur.

Authorities said his death was a result of a "rido" or family feud between his in-laws and the suspects.

In a petition signed by more than 40 Muslim religious leaders, the protesters have asked local government officials and the residents to help in solving Marangit's killing.

"We are asking all Muslims to help in the early resolution of the case to protect the sanctity of Islam as our foundation of being Muslims." Usman said. ***Butch Enerio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

**BASILAN CARGO**

DENNIS SABANGAN

Port workers unload rubber from a ship at the Basilan port. Rubber is one of the major products of Basilan and it continues to provide livelihood to residents despite Basilan's being in the news nowadays because of Abu Sayyaf bandits.

# Bicol Army officers call NPA crime group

LEGAZPI CITY—Bicol military officials have now classified the New People's Army as a criminal group.

"They are more preoccupied with their extortion activities rather than combat against our forces," said Col. Manuel Mariano, commander of the 2nd Infantry Battalion, during a recent media forum here.

Mariano said communist guerillas operating in the countryside have been avoiding combat with "our well-trained and disciplined soldiers to avoid heavy losses although they have stepped up their harassment, liquidation, and extortion activities."

Col. Dante Bonifacio, 202nd Infantry Brigade commander, supported Mariano's claim and admitted that the communist insurgents still pose the highest threat to the peace and order situation in the region.

Bonifacio said the combined forces of the Bicol Regional Party Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front serve as the biggest single challenge to the internal security of the region.

"There are some 357 NPA guerillas armed with some 407 firearms in Bicol," he said.

Since 1999, the NPA has executed at least 100 persons.

In Albay alone, the NPA executed at least 35 people.

Bonifacio said the recent burning of four Philtranco buses in Sorsogon and Albay and the burning of a cell phone site in Camarines Norte showed that the NPAs were now more preoccupied with extortion.

Chief Supt. Enrique Galang Jr., Bicol police chief, said bus operators have started implementing their own security measures to prevent more attacks.

"In short, we have to help each other," he said.

Galang said people join the rebels out of fear, poverty, abuse and injustice, graft and corruption, and ignorance. ***Tony S. Macasinag, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

# Consumers complain of frequent brownouts

By EDWIN O. FERNANDEZ
*PDI Mindanao Bureau*

COTABATO CITY—Power consumers here have been complaining to the Aboitiz-owned Cotabato Light and Power Company (Colight) of frequent power interruptions the past two weeks.

But engineer Chris Ferolino, Colight resident manager, said the problem is in the hands of the state-owned National Power Corporation (Napocor).

"We, too, are complaining," Ferolino said of the frequent outages which he described as "patterned."

Almost every 10 to 10:30 a.m., Colight experiences power outages from the Napocor. "It is always like that and the Napocor has so far forwarded no explanation."

Last week, Mindanao residents experienced an island-wide interruption that triggered rumors of possible terror attacks by loyalists of former Gov. Nur Misuari of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

But Napocor officials said the Mindanao-wide power outage was triggered by a technical problem in Agus 2 plant in Lanao del Sur.

It ruled out sabotage against the power firm.

Rumors also circulated here that the frequent power interruptions could be a prelude to a power rate increase.

But Ferolino said a new increase in power rates is remote.

He said power rates increases are caused by a weaker peso against the dollar and increases in crude oil prices in the world market.

Colight operates about five diesel-fed engines which serve some 300,000 households in Cotabato City and part of Maguindanao on a ration basis.

"Whenever there's permanent fault, Colight will run its power generators to serve vital installations," he said.

Consumers are irked over the frequent brownouts since they occur during the holiday season. But Ferolino said "we have to live with it, that's beyond our control." ***Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

# W. Visayas left behind in rosy economic forecast

By NESTOR P. BURGOS JR.
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

ILOILO CITY—Despite the rosy economic picture painted by President Macapagal-Arroyo, not all is well in the economy of Western Visayas.

Key sectors of the region's economy declined in the third quarter of this year, a report of the National Economic Development Authority (Neda) said.

Prices of goods and services in the region rose by an average 5.6 percent, higher than the previous quarter (5.2 percent) and the same quarter last year (4.2 percent). This was attributed to the increase in the prices of food products especially corn, dairy products and beverage.

In the non-food group, the housing and repair sector went up from 1.3 percent in the same period last year to 7 percent this quarter due to a sharp increase in the prices of cement.

Among provinces, Aklan registered the highest inflation rate of 16.4 percent due to the rise in the prices of services; housing and repair; and fuel, light and water. Aklan was followed by Capiz (5.7 percent), Negros Occidental (5.2 percent), Iloilo (4.4 percent) and Antique (3.5 percent).

As of September this year, 35 firms shut down and 84 others laid off workers.

The hardest hit firms, mostly from Negros Occidental and Iloilo, were those in the wholesale and retail trade sectors, community, social and personal services sectors where 3,506 workers were laid off.

Yet, the unemployment rate improved to 10.1 percent from the previous quarter's 15.5 percent and from the same period last year (10.4 percent).

There was an improvement in the underemployment rate with 13 percent as of the third quarter this year from 14.5 percent in the same period last year and 15.2 percent in the last quarter. Around 2.43 million or 89.9 percent of the 2.7 million in the labor force were employed.

The Neda also reported a 46.8 percent drop in investments based on data of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

SEC-registered firms recorded P43.3 million in capitalization from P81.3 million recorded in the same quarter last year.

The number of establishments in the region also decreased by 35.6 percent reaching only 256 establishments this year.

The drop in investments can also be seen in the decrease in the total value of private building construction amounting to P441.37 million in the third quarter, a 27.67 percent drop from the P610.21 million recorded in the same period last year.

Despite reassurances by tourism officials that tourism remains upbeat in the region, tourist arrivals dropped from 86,823 in the third quarter last year to 73,788 this year. The decrease was blamed to ongoing kidnapping crisis in Basilan and the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

Although there were fewer tourists, they poured in more money into the local economy amounting to P1.35 billion pesos from P660 million.

In agriculture, palay production dropped by 10 percent to 552,001 metric tons (mt) compared to last year. Banana, coconut and mango production also dropped by 0.7 percent, 4.2 percent and 1.39 percent, respectively.

The Neda report blamed strong winds brought by typhoon "Jolina" for the drop in banana production. The drop in coconut production was attributed to what economists said was a cyclical production pattern. Only corn production increased by 3.4 percent—35,851 mt to 37,085 mt.

INQUIRER Northern Luzon
JUN BANDAYREL, Editor ■ ROLANDO B. FERNANDEZ, Bureau Chief

# Recognition, pension elusive for Huk vets

BY TONETTE OREJAS
*Magalang, Pampanga*

**"S*AUPAN na kata kaya* (Will she help us)?" Elena Yonzon, 72, asked. Her female companion, seated to her right, gave no buoyant reply. "*Lawen tamu* (Let's see)."**

Yonzon, turning to this correspondent, said she has asked the same question over and over again. "Oh, many presidents came and went. The recognition was just on paper, in speeches, never in deed," she recalled, the pain in her breaking through her words.

This time, the question was asked of President Macapagal-Arroyo, whose father is from Pampanga, where the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon (Hukbalahap) was founded.

Huk *supremo* Luis Taruc, now 88 and with a cane for a constant company, roused his comrades' spirit. Before introducing the President, Taruc hollered from the stage: "*Gunyat tamu! Atin tang Gloria!* (Let's move! We'll see the best of times!)"

This drew claps, and optimism from the members of the Hukbalahap Veterans Association. They came all the way from Isabela, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Rizal, Batangas, Laguna and Quezon.

Yonzon, Apong Elen to many in San Nicolas, a former guerrilla base in San Luis town, was all ears to Ms Macapagal.

"It's been too long, 11 years. I still have no pension," she rued.

It is the same for her husband Crispin, 78. Like her, he served in the Hukbalahap's Squadron 55 under Kumander Bundalian. Crispin, she said, fought like a true Huk, fierce to the Japanese soldiers.

She does not underestimate her own contribution. In the liberation movement that ensued after March 1942 when American and Filipino soldiers surrendered Bataan to the Japanese Imperial Army, Yonzon, at 14, served as spy and courier. Like other women in the movement, she also gathered food for the guerrillas.

The bulk of the 50,000-strong Hukbalahap then were young fighters who were barely out of their teens, Taruc said.

Like him, many have been slowed down, weakened by age.

Crispin, Yonzon lamented, is sick with diabetes and arthritis. To be able to buy medicines, the couple sold the small piece of land they have.

### Hope in GMA

Last month, the President honored the Hukvets by joining them in celebrating the 138th anniversary of Magalang, the town on the foothills of Mt. Arayat, which was a reclusive camp to the guerrillas. She called the war "not an ordinary event."

Speaking in Kapampangan, the President noted that among the guests were Hukvets, who fought together with the United States and Philippine soldiers against the Japanese army and resumed agrarian unrest after the Americans returned.

After hailing their service to the country, expounding on Hukbalahap's root of rebellion that was landlessness, promising a new and peaceful revolution against poverty through land reform, Ms Macapagal gave no specific form of assistance to the Hukvets.

"On this day we recognize our Hukvets," she said.

It was enough, however, to send the old folks clapping loud and long. Taruc did not sound off any dismay. "This is a rally in support of the President's good program," he told reporters. He has pinned the hope of his comrades on the Macapagal administration.

"After 11 years of processing (applications for pension), only less than 7,000 Hukvets have pension," Taruc said. "It seems it is intentional that they are delaying our right to justice (to be recognized)."

Asked why, he explained that it was because "past administrations were under the thumb of American influence and imperialism."

### Injustice

"They do not like our boosting nationalism or patriotic motivation," recalling also the time when he and several socialists won seats in Congress but were barred from serving.

The battle now is not mainly about pension, Taruc clarified.

"We did not fight to be paid, to be rewarded. We fought to be recognized as patriotic Filipinos. Those who did not fight were first given the priority of recognition, so we had to protest. How come *kaming nakilaban ay hindi nyo kinikilala*?" he said.

Retired Col. Frank Quesada said an unnumbered military order of the late US President Franklin Roosevelt classified Filipino-American veterans as those in the Philippine Constabulary, old Philippine Scouts, Philippine Commonwealth Army and new Philippine Scouts.

The Huks were not classified as "war veterans."

Former US President Bill Clinton, in a 1996 proclamation honoring the Filipino veterans of World War II, made no reference whatsoever to the contributions of the Hukbalahap.

This, despite a March 27, 1942 letter by Taruc to Gen. Douglas MacArthur, commander in chief of the United States Army Forces in the Far East.

Taruc wrote to MacArthur: "We, the people of the Philippines loyal to the government of the United States and the Philippines, are determined to offer our lives for the defense of democracy and territorial rights of both the Philippines and the US. We wish that you would kindly grant your guidance and support to this newly born but militant force of the Filipino people."

To this date, the US government has not recognized the Hukbalahap as "among the most active patriotic resistance group during World War II," Taruc noted.

Even Filipinos conscripted by the US government in the war are denied their wartime benefits because they were singled out from the Recession Act of 1946, he added.

MacArthur, according to Taruc, did cite the "30,000 Huks" in the book "American Caesar" by William Manchester.

While recognition came at the home front through Presidential Decree No. 12-07 issued by the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos in 1977, it did not hasten the grant of wartime benefits to the Huks. Applications for pension were opened only in 1990.

By June 1995, only 1,362 Hukvets and 172 of their surviving spouses received state support.

The pension was too meager. For the first 48 months, they got P500 monthly. On the third year, it increased to P1,000 monthly. Yearly thereon, a monthly increase of P500 is added.

What is more pathetic is that the government, for lack of funds, has withheld the P500 that should accrue every year, Taruc said.

He emphasized that a third of those in the 50,000-strong Hukbalahap have not lived to see the day when their "sacrifice for the motherland" is acknowledged as patriotism.

Not a bit losing hope, Taruc said: "I will request her (Ms Macapagal) if she really cares for the welfare of veterans, '*Kung wala kami noon, saan kayo ngayon*?' Recognition, that's the most important. Pension is automatic if the President will uphold our right to justice. We are seeking justice because we fought gallantly in the war."

Yonzon said their fight isn't about money.

"Patriotism has no price. But isn't the state expected to show respect and care for its freedom fighters?" she asked.

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**MANANG** Luding Amador proudly stands alongside her gmelina babies.
MELVIN GASCON

# Meet Vizcaya's one-woman 'Green Army'

BY MELVIN GASCON
*Nueva Vizcaya*

**LUDIVINA Amador found her one true love at age 15. She had, however, decided not to take the marriage vow for the rest of her life. Today, she continues to live with her "loved one" and she's happy.**

Until today, at 60, Amador, Manang Luding to many, never tires of scaling the mountains of Sitio Malong in Barangay Salinas, about 10 km from the town proper of Bambang.

Every day, she never misses to visit the trees in a nearby forest she tenderly brought up like a child through all these years.

She offers our group a hike to the mountain. We obliged, because we wanted to see for ourselves the forest that this lady had built.

As far as she could remember, Amador has, all by her lonesome, planted around 1,000 gmelina seedlings, 200 mango trees and around 500 seeds of various tree species on a 20-hectare land in a mountain in Salinas.

"I never count what I plant, I just go on." she said. "How many, you ask me? Well, I know there are so many already."

And she isn't stopping. Neither is she awaiting any help from the government. She spends her own money planting and taking care of the forest. Yet, the area she plants on is not even one that she can call her own. But still, she loves what she's doing.

The area, which falls under the care of the Protected Area Management Bureau (PAMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, surrounds the once-famous Salinas Salt Springs.

"I always recall what my late father used to tell me, 'Plant trees and soon you will reap the fruits of your labor'," Amador said.

### First settlers

The Amadors were among the first settlers in Salinas, coming from Barangay Ineangan in Dupax del Norte town. In 1956, they were given a one-hectare farmland just below the mountain in Sitio Malong.

"We were given a parcel of land by then President Ramon Magsaysay because of my late father, who was a World War II veteran," Amador explained.

At age 16, and a girl at that, she was helping her father attend to their small rice field, while her brothers and sisters went to school.

"I had to make the sacrifice because I pitied my father. I could see then that he needed somebody to help him in the farm, especially that he was getting weaker," she said.

Amador's mother Rufina, now 82, attests to her daughter's dedication for work, especially in her "mission" of helping bring back the earth's forest cover.

"(Planting trees) was practically what she did all the time," Lola Rufina said of Amador, the second eldest of her eight children. "I think that may have also been the reason she has forgotten all about getting married."

"After my husband died, she had to take care of our farm," Lola Rufina recalled. "The income we got from the farm helped us send her brothers and sisters to school."

Councilor Rachel Magday, whose father's rice farm lies beside the Amadors', affirmed the admiration village folk have for Amador.

"That is the reputation she has here because she's really very hardworking. When I was still a child, I remember seeing her personally plow her farm," Magday said.

Amador said: "Sometimes people laugh at my style of planting which, they noted, violated the principles of agriculture because the plants are often too close to one another. But I tell myself not to mind my critics. What is important for me is I get to fill this whole area with trees."

While she spoke, Amador leisurely climbed the mountain, clearing with her bolo felled branches that lay on our way. Behind her, we desperately gasped for breath, and struggled to match the pace of her ascent.

But Amador vows to protect her beloved forest against any intruder who may just be coming in for vested interest.

"I am not afraid of anyone because I know what I am doing is right and I don't get to step on the heels of anyone," she said matter-of-factly.

### Harassment

She remains a picture of firmness, despite constant "harassment" from people who claim ownership of the area she had re-forested.

She revealed that she had been charged before the barangay government with trespassing and illegal entry to a private property.

"But the case did not push through because they did not have the documents. I may just be an elementary graduate but I know you have to have documents to own a piece of land," she said. "They (claimants) always failed because all along, their motive was devilish."

Amador sees to it that the surroundings of the trees are regularly pruned for grasses, because these often caused forest fires. She does the cleaning, or pays for one, at least three times a year.

In late October, she had to hire the services of 10 women from nearby Barangay Barat to clear the woods. She butchered a pig she raised in her backyard for their meals and paid the laborers P100 a day.

She also bought several sacks of fertilizer for her gmelina trees. "When rainfall is scarce, they need this," she explained.

It's just a pity, she said, that many of the trees she had planted got burned by forest fires that hit the area. She blamed *kaingeros* for starting out the fires.

In *kaingin* or slash-and-burn farming, mountain farmers set the forest on fire to clear the land of shrubbery and then go on to felling the forest trees or anything that's left with it.

Also, burning is the easiest means for farmers to clear the grasslands and convert them to vegetable farms.

However, wildfires often crawl to other areas, and sear anything in their path, including young trees like mangoes and other fruit trees that Amador used to plant.

The exploits of Amador caught the attention of environment officials during a recent meeting called for by the PAMB to explain to occupants of public lands in Salinas on the government's forest management program.

During the meeting, Amador pleaded that she be not ejected from the forest she fell in love with through the decades. She detailed her efforts and clarified her intention of planting trees in the forest and caring for them, without any intention of claiming ownership of the land.

This amazed DENR officials.

Regidor de Leon, provincial environment officer, was so overwhelmed by admiration that he offered her to be his foster mother.

"This woman is remarkable," De Leon said of Amador. "I was so happy to discover that there are still people like her who have this level of concern for our environment."

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# The boundless generosity of La Union's 'Apo Baket'

BY GIA DAMASO DUMO
*Luna, La Union*

*AMONG 60 images displayed at the Marian procession in Intramuros this month was the seven-foot tall replica of Our Lady of Namacpacan, the patroness of travelers, whose original image is enshrined in Luna, La Union.*

*It is touted as the tallest statue of the Blessed Mother in the Philippines and is also said to be miraculous. On her feast day on Nov. 25, she was re-crowned as the Immaculate Conception of Namacpacan by Papal Nuncio Rev. Antonio Franco.*

**WHERE is the Lady of Namacpacan?" asked Pope Pius XII on waking up after having a dream the night before about the lady. It was 1958, the year before the Pope died, and Namacpacan was no longer on the map of the Philippines as the town had been renamed Luna in 1906 to honor the patriots Juan and Antonio.**

In 1959, papal successor Pope John XXIII received a letter from Rev. Juan Sison of the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia, requesting authority to consecrate the image of the Lady of Namacpacan in Luna for continued veneration by the local residents.

As if having finally pinned the elusive answer, Pope John XXIII issued a decree on Sept. 20 that same year for the image to be crowned with gold in a solemn rite and "adorned with gold and diamonds and ornately dressed."

Thus, 42 years ago on Nov. 24—and reenacted recently by Papal Nuncio Rev. Antonio Franco—the image of Our Lady of Namacpacan was canonically crowned.

This was how historian, Marian devotee and San Fernando City Mayor Mary Jane Ortega could breathe life and meaning into a seemingly esoteric religious rite, and understandably so.

Seventeen years ago, before Ortega embarked on her research about the Lady of Namacpacan, historical records about it in the parish or the diocese were either scant, ill-preserved or non-existent.

**THE STATUE** of 'Apong Baket' with the papal nuncio.
GIA DAMASO DUMO

### Miraculous lady

Responding to the demand for information on the subject, Ortega patiently pored through history books, dug up church archives and interviewed parishioners and old priests, to put together a veritable article about the "miraculous lady," which was published in a nationally circulated magazine in 1984.

Based on her account, and supported by that of the late parish priest Rev. Quintin Velasquez, the finely carved softwood statue arrived in the coastal village of Darigayos in Namacpacan in 1871 aboard a galleon from Acapulco, Mexico.

It was ordered from Spain by an Augustinian priest and intended for the Immaculate Conception Minor Seminary in Vigan, Ilocos Sur.

However, stormy seas forced the galleon to dock in the cove of Darigayos. There, the ship's captain decided to have the statue carried to the port and brought to its destination over land. But the next day, the statue could not be budged. This was interpreted by the priests as a sign that the statue wanted to stay.

Arrangements were thus made for its enshrinement in the church of St. Catherine of Alexandria where it has stayed since and been known as the Lady of Namacpacan. Many "miraculous" events in the town have also been attributed to this image.

One famous story, first told by the late parish priest Rev. Macario Diaz, was that of Rosa Roldan, who lived in the 1940s and was born lame.

It is said that Rosa, who was 13 at that time, was left alone in their hut one day while her folks went out farming. She then heard the voice of an old woman asking for a drink of cold water. Being lame, Rosa told the woman to help herself to some water from the earthen jar in the kitchen, and also some leftover rice and fish.

As the old woman drank from the coconut shell, some of the water that touched her lips spilled on Rosa's legs. Strength suddenly returned to Rosa's legs and she began to walk. After thanking Rosa for the food and drink, the old woman told Rosa to meet her at the north side of the church.

When Rosa went there, what she saw was an altar with the image of the Blessed Mother. Thus began her devotion to the Blessed Mother and it is said that Rosa lived to be a healer and adviser in the town.

In October and November 1904, a number of Igorots coming from different settlements started coming down to Namacpacan to be baptized. Their names are preserved in the archives of the Diocese of San Fernando, Ortega said.

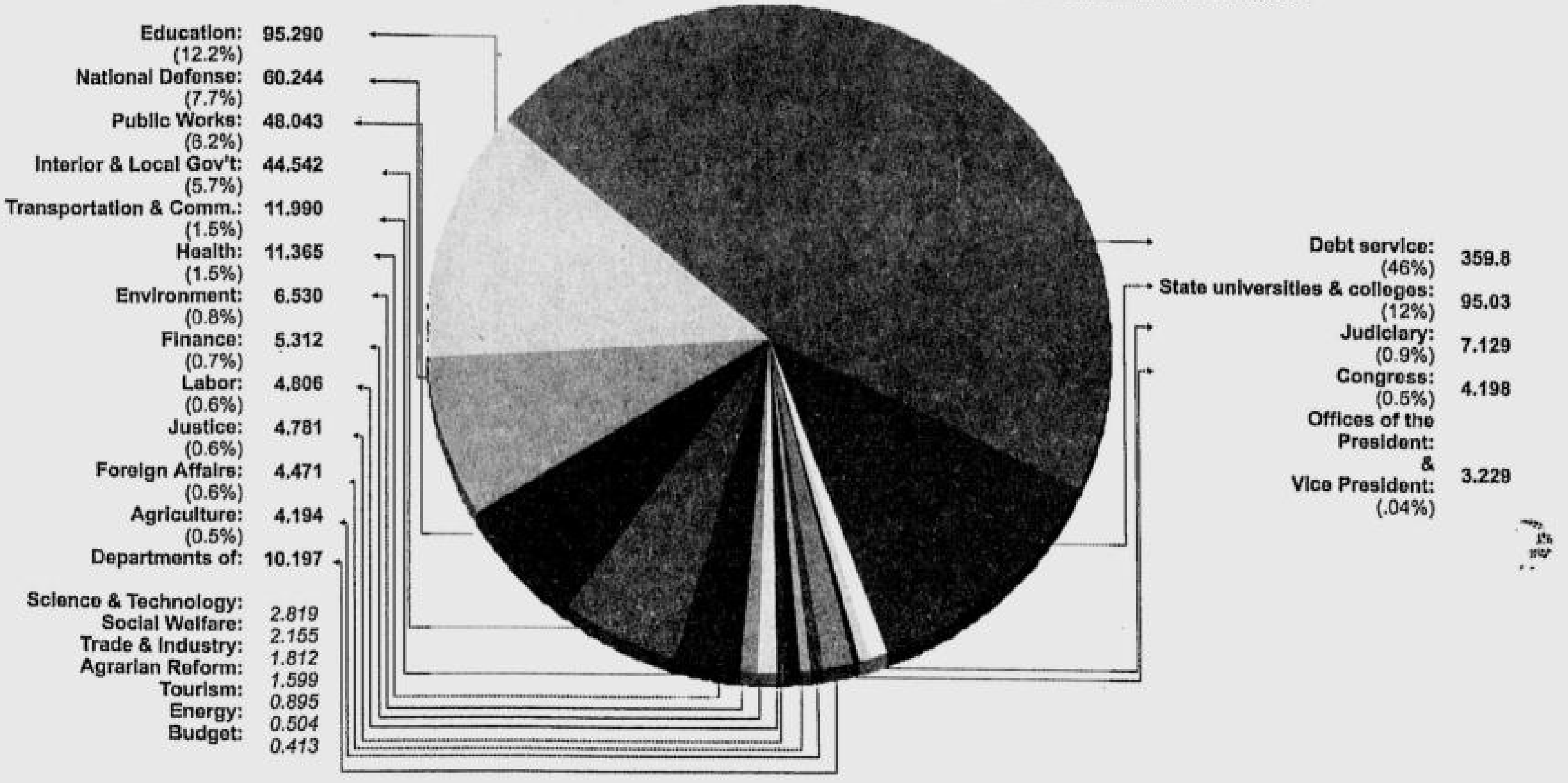
The Igorots claimed to have met a tall woman who told them to gó to Namacpacan and upon seeing the statue, they confirmed that it was the same lady who had been to their place and given them food and blankets.

Fr. Gregorio Nillo, parish priest of St. Catherine of Alexandria church for eight years, considers his assignment to Luna a "miracle in itself." Before his assignment, he said he dreamed of the Blessed Mother telling him that she would take care of him.

Eight years ago, he initiated a fund raising campaign for the renovation of the church, which had suffered years of neglect. To this day, donations have been pouring in, making possible the continued physical improvement of the church, and providing the needs of its workers, Nillo said.

Namacpacan (accent on the last syllable), stems from the Ilocano word *makan* (food), and means "one who feeds." Since its arrival 130 years ago, the image of Our Lady of Namacpacan has drawn countless devotees, each with a story to tell of the boundless generosity of "Apo Baket" who has indeed "fed" and provided for her people.

**2002 National Budget – P780.8 (in billions)**



TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

**IT'S** toy guns sales galore on the sidewalks of Baguo City.

# *Despite gimmicks, Christmas sales 'down, down, down'*

**By Yolanda Fuertes**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

DAGUPAN CITY—When it's Christmas and stores have to hold sales and resort to gimmicks to lure customers, times are economically bad indeed.

Although most stores here, including those at the malls, are offering big discounts, sales have dipped miserably this year, according to a mall owner.

Because sales are down, this city's biggest mall CSI has to postpone until March next year the grand draw of its promo raffle "Key to Millions," said its owner, Belen Fernandez.

Stores usually hold sales during the lean months or from July to September. When October comes, people start flocking to shopping centers and businesses go brisk as December nears.

"But look, it is almost the end of December and most stores are still holding sales. It's really a bad business year," Fernandez lamented.

She noted that Pangasinan's economy is growing every year as seen by the spending habit of Pangasinenses every December.

But this year, the economy could have been "seriously affected" that the cash registers are not merrily ringing at all, she said.

"It was only two days before Christmas when our sales improved, but we expect the slack from Dec. 26 to 29 before sales peak again two days before the New Year. After that, we don't know what happens," Fernandez said.

The CSI has four shopping centers, including malls in Dagupan, Urdaneta and Baguio cities.

Most high-end products like appliances hardly move, Fernandez said, adding that only grocery and gift items are selling.

As a come-on, Fernandez offered free rides to shoppers from the downtown area to the CSI Mall in Lucao District, about 2 km away.

At the downtown area, stores are deserted and sales clerks have to ask shoppers to see their wares.

"It's down, down, down," a cloth retailer told the INQUIRER when asked how the business was going.

"They have gone to the malls," another storeowner lamented.

But Fernandez said malls cater to a different market.

Many businessmen also blamed the traffic experiment implemented by the city government for the poor business of most stores at the downtown area.

Under the experiment, most public utility vehicles from other towns are not allowed to enter the downtown area.

"We hope the experiment ends soon. We are not earning anymore," a storeowner said.

# Pimentel hits bias against Mindanao

(From page A1)

already approved by both houses of Congress but still to be signed into law by the President, was criticized on another front by labor leader Crispin Beltran, now a party-list congressman representing Bayan Muna.

Beltran said that under the new "anti-poor and anti-worker" budget, Filipinos will pay P421 million to service the country's foreign debt daily, but receive only 35 centavos' worth of health services every day.

"The government's resources are no longer directed toward filling the deep need of the Filipino people for economic support services but toward maintaining the status quo where the people's welfare is always ignored," he said.

Beltran had voted against the budget, saying it was highly unacceptable that the government continues to shell out P175 million every day for foreign debt interest payments, on top of the P246 million the government releases every day to pay for the principal.

Beltran's computations add up to P 153.7 billion in total debt service.

But the 2002 national budget actually allocates a total of P359.8 billion for interest and principal payments, or 46 percent of the entire budget. This works out to P986 million a day—double Beltran's already high estimate.

### Frustrating experience

Looking back on the budget deliberations, Beltran said he found the experience "frustrating" and "exasperating."

"This is the first time we (Bayan Muna representatives) have witnessed first hand how the legislative branch of government deliberates over and finalizes the National Budget, and without reservation, we must say that the experience has been frustrating, quite exasperating," he said.

Beltran said the deliberations were hurried, and the consultations that were conducted with the affected agencies and the sectors concerned were "very slap-dash."

"Suffice it to say, the opinions and views of the basic sectors regarding the specific items and their respective allocations were heard, but generally ignored. *Lutong makaw na ang mga alokasyon, kahit pa may mga naging debate* (The allocations were a done deal, even though there was a debate)," he said.

"*Nauwi din sa kagustuhan ng Malakanyang* (In the end Malacañang's will was followed) and (as) in the previous years, the military got the biggest share, along with foreign debt servicing."

He said it was unconscionable that Congress allowed the government to allocate P274 million daily for the military and the police, while allocating only the equivalent of P20 for the housing needs of every Filipino (or less than P0.05 every day), P129 for health needs for the entire year (P0.35 daily per Filipino) and P1,155 for every Filipino and his or her education (P3 daily for every Filipino).

"I then take extreme issue with the national government's allegation that the workers and other poor sectors demand for a P125 wage increase is anti-poor and anti-worker," he said.

"What is anti-poor and anti-worker is the 2002 budget which Congress has approved, as expected and ordered by Malacañang," Beltran added.

"The Filipino people will not be getting anything from the government this coming year; because, again, their welfare was placed last among the government's priorities," he said.

### Barangay elections

Pimentel said it was certain that the barangay elections in May would push through as scheduled, now that the government had earmarked P1.1 billion for this purpose.

He said the Senate not only restored the P900 million allocated by the House for the elections but added P200 million more.

The P900-million proposal was only half of the P1.8 billion originally sought by the Commission on Elections, and was scrapped.in the Senate version by Sen. John Osmeña, chair of the Senate finance committee.

"I was able to convince Senator Osmeña to restore the amount," Pimentel said. "It's not right to postpone the barangay polls, or any election for that matter, by withholding the funds for the purpose because that is contrary to democratic process," he added.

He said the "overwhelming sentiment" among residents in more than 42,000 barangays across the country was to proceed with the village elections.

Pimentel also endorsed a proposal from some local government and barangay officials to allow youth volunteers to sit on the board of election inspectors in the polling precincts.

The chair of the poll board, however, should preferably be a public school teacher, since teachers, Pimentel said, were already familiar with election procedures.

He said he did not think the President would veto the funding allocation for the barangay elections in spite of her recent public pronouncements that she favored a postponement due to financial constraints.

"Theoretically, she can veto it. But I don't think she will do that, for after all, the people are against postponing the barangay election," he said.

# *PAF chief expects to get more planes*

DAVAO CITY—At least half of the P20-billion budget being sought by the military for next year would go to the Philippine Air Force.

Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor, Philippine Air Force chief, told the INQUIRER that the service command had already planned how to spend its P10-billion allocation.

"The first phase of expenditures would be for the upgrading and maintenance of existing aircraft, equipment and facilities," Defensor said.

For this, he said, the military has allocated P5.4 billion.

Defensor said the remaining P4.6 billion would go to the procurement of new aircraft and other needs to sustain the country's air power.

Defensor admitted that the military's budget proposal had faced rough sailing before the Senate, but said he had been optimistic that the senators would see its importance.

Recently, the country received a C-130 cargo plane from the United States.

However, Defensor noted that the existing fleet of aircraft were refurbished ones that require more funds for maintenance.

But with the new aircraft, Defensor said the Air Force could enhance its capability to conduct air strikes, search and rescue operations, and relief operations for calamity victims.

"Like cars, aircraft are efficient when new and are also less costly to maintain," he said.

The PAF chief also said they hoped to enter into a contract with a supplier early next year following the approval of the budget.

"We hope to buy one or two new C-130 planes, which could arrive next year," he said. ***Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

# Nur's wife, children long for KL reunion

(From page A1)

want to hold and embrace their father. This is a human need, especially during this festive period of Christmas and New Year," he said.

Pamatong said Malaysia should press the Philippines to allow Misuari, 60, to go to a third country.

The lawyer said Tarhata, 26, wanted him to accompany them for the meeting with Misuari.

"I am like an elder brother to her. She is in a foreign country and she is fearful. She and the children will only meet Misuari if I join them," he said.

On Monday, Mahathir said Malaysia might allow Misuari's family to visit him.

"We will consider," Mahathir was quoted as saying by the official Bernama news agency.

Malaysia has repeatedly said it wants to deport Misuari as soon as possible, partly because it does not want to be tainted with any connection to what could be seen as Islamic terrorism.

### OIC appeal

Philippine President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday rejected an appeal from the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) for Misuari to be given sanctuary in a third country and instead vowed to put him on trial for rebellion.

Misuari's followers launched an uprising in the southern Philippine island of Jolo last month in a futile attempt to derail elections that ended his five-year hold on the governorship of a Muslim self-rule region.

Misuari fled after the short-lived rebellion and was arrested Nov. 24 with six followers off an island in Malaysia's Sabah state on Borneo island.

Malaysia provided sanctuary to Misuari's separatist group, the Moro National Liberation Front, in the 1970s and 1980s.

In Manila, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez yesterday said the government was taking back Misuari despite the apparent renewal of military activity by his armed followers.

Golez was referring to an ambush pulled off by Misuari's loyalists in Jolo, Sulu, on Monday, which resulted in the wounding of 12 Marines.

"It has no effect whatsoever. It will not affect the government's decision to have Misuari repatriated," Golez told Palace reporters in a teleconference call.

"Our Armed Forces are prepared to counter any move by Misuari renegade forces," he said.

Golez earlier said that Malaysia would repatriate Misuari early January.

The foreign ministers of the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia agreed in Manila last week on the terms of Misuari's return to face rebellion charges.

Indonesia chairs the Committee of the Eight, the body tasked by the influential OIC to monitor the implementation of the 1996 peace agreement between the Philippine government and the MNLF.

### 'Leaderless'

In a separate teleconference call, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the MNLF's Council of 15 was consolidating its hold over both the organization and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Council leader Dr. Parouk Hussin ran and won as governor of the ARMM with the blessings of Malacañang. He will assume the post early next year.

It was the same body which ousted the 60-year-old Misuari as chair of the MNLF.

"Misuari's followers are currently leaderless," Tiglao said.

Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen asked supporters of Misuari to refrain from issuing statements that tend to agitate people.

Dilangalen was reacting to the recent warning made by Misuari's lawyer Pamatong that Malaysia's deportation of the former ARMM governor next month would trigger a "bloody civil war" in the country.

### Agitator

"Such statements agitate people . . . (issuing such statements) should be avoided," Dilangalen said in a phone interview.

He himself did not want to comment on whether Pamatong's warning was likely to happen.

But the outspoken lawmaker said that personally, he believed it was better for all if Misuari remains in exile abroad.

"Everything will cool down," he said.

Dilangalen also noted that for him, Misuari is a "national problem" and that the government should resolve its problem with Misuari by considering "what's good for the national interest."

He said this was what he has been recommending to people close to the President.

Misuari's lawyer had said last week that the Moro rebel leader would become a "rallying point of all types of violent reactions from fanatic and non-fanatic elements of the Bangsamoro region." ***With reports from Carlito Pablo and Christine O. Avendaño***

# Singapore gov't tries text-dating

(From page A1)

young people to date.

A government-run dating service is using the growing popularity of text messaging to match its eligible citizens.

Members of Singapore's Social Development Unit will be able to send 40 free text messages over their mobile phones to other professionals. A computer will match the singles after analyzing their age, occupation and gender, the Straits Times reported.

The Social Development Unit acts as an official dating agency that organizes parties and other activities for educated single people.

"The women will be at least two years younger than the men and preferably in different professions," Sam Soon Mee, manager of Premier Club that organizes events for the dating service, was quoted as saying in the newspaper.

To play the game, members first register with a nickname. They then "chat" with three other members of the opposite sex. The next day the dating agency gets all the members together and their identities are revealed.

Singapore has been encouraging women to get married and have more babies by offering tax breaks.

### 'Will you marry me?'

Finding the perfect match was also the concern of a Japanese woman who entered a TV contest to find a husband.

Twenty-four-year-old Kuni Nakazono was the lucky winner chosen from among 600 candidates by the Nippon television channel. Her prize was marriage to a Turkish man.

Nakazono works as a volunteer in an old people's home in Japan.

Nakazono went to Turkey last week to review some 200 eager candidates in a bar in Istanbul, the Anatolia news agency reported.

In an advertisement published earlier in Turkish newspapers, which read "Will you marry me?" in bold letters, Nakazono invited anyone interested in tying the knot and settling down in Japan to come to the bar and be interviewed.

The ad, which specified that the young woman had never had a boyfriend, drew some 200 hopefuls from different parts of Turkey.

According to Anatolia, however, most seemed to be motivated more by a desire to get out of their crisis-hit country and try their luck in Japan than by finding a soulmate.

### Young at heart

Among the contestants was a 60-year-old hotel owner, Maksut Akgun.

"I may be 60, but actually I feel younger than an 18-year-old," Akgun told the news agency as he waited outside the bar.

For four hours, Nakazono, with the help of a translator, interviewed the candidates and jotted down their phone numbers.

When she makes up her mind, Nakazono is expected to call the lucky man, although the agency said no deadline was set for her to make her decision.

The young woman, whose every move in Istanbul was recorded by Nippon TV, returned to Japan after conducting the interviews.

Her adventures in Istanbul are to be aired on the television channel in January, according to press reports.

***AP, AFP***

# Ramos: I'm not running in 2004 polls

(From page A1)

want to be placed in high positions later on and they think that my being there (in Malacañang) will be one way to help guarantee a better future for them," Ramos explained.

If these people were already occupying powerful positions in the government, he said, it was "very possible they want a further strengthening of their own personal positions by having me run."

"But then that would be at the expense of the incumbent President . . . and I would not want that to happen," he said.

"Those speculations about me running again are merely that, just speculations, and rumors, and maybe even intrigues," he added, stressing that talks about him seeking the presidency in 2004 "are not only coming from the Lakas, if at all."

### Not a threat

"At the level of the Lakas leadership, I have continuously explained my position and it has been adopted by the leadership. They know where I stand," he said.

"I'm not a threat to anybody in the Lakas who wants to run in 2004 for the highest position."

On Saturday, 12 party leaders, including Ramos, had dinner with Ms Macapagal in Malacañang. The meeting had originally been set to be held at the home of Speaker Jose de Venecia in Dasmariñas Village, Makati City.

Ramos refused to say what transpired during the meeting but said the party spokesperson would give the details later on "because the timing is important."

According to Ramos, he and the President were "meeting regularly."

The day before the Lakas dinner, the two met during the Armed Forces of the Philippines founding anniversary program in Camp Aguinaldo.

Ramos said he and Ms Macapagal talked about problems in the military, including the situation in Basilan and Sulu.

According to Ramos, he also gets in touch with the President each time he leaves for engagements abroad and each time he returns home.

Aside from telephone calls and personal contacts, he gives her written reports about his trips, including recommendations about certain issues he comes across while traveling.

He said he had "easy access" to Ms Macapagal through her cellular phone, and her appointments and confidential secretaries.

### Persistent talks

His numerous denials notwithstanding, talks persist that because many people are urging him to run again, Ramos might just be persuaded to do so in 2004.

"I'm not running for president, I'm not running for any position. I'm happy where I am as a private citizen," Ramos said.

Lakas will have a candidate for 2004, Ramos said. "*Pero hindi ako 'yon* (But it won't be me)."

"I am completely happy with what I'm doing now, as a private citizen, as chairman of the Ramos Peace and Development Foundation (RPDEV)," he said.

RPDEV is composed of former Cabinet members, retired legislators, young people, and business leaders who serve as a support institution for the government, regardless of who is president. The foundation aims to serve as a catalyst for change, a medium for unity and progress and a force for mutual understanding.

But his numerous trips abroad add fuel to speculation about his political plans. That several Filipino community publications abroad feature glowing stories about him and his presidency and express a wish to see him become president again only makes matters worse.

"I'll make it clear again. I'm not running in 2004 because I see my role as ex-President as an elder statesman of the country. Call me the '*kuya*' (elder brother) in the big Filipino family of 77 million people. The '*kuya*' to the family, as well as to the mother (referring to Ms Macapagal) of this Filipino family. And that's the role I'm playing now," Ramos insisted.

### PCA connection

But while "*Kuya*" Eddie keeps saying he is happy just being plain citizen Eddie, he declines to rein in the People's Consultative Assembly (PCA), which some say is connected with him, in its sometimes virulent criticism of the Macapagal administration.

In the first place, he told the INQUIRER, his "connection" with the PCA was only "accidental and associative." According to him, he belongs to only one civil-society group—the Federation of Retired Commissioned and Enlisted Officers (Forces).

Many in the administration have become uncomfortable with the outspokenness of the PCA, specifically of its chair Salvador Enriquez Jr., budget secretary during the Ramos administration, and secretary general Linda Olaguer Montayre.

In fact, Ramos said, Ms Macapagal talked to him precisely about this matter some three months ago.

Ramos said the discussion was done "in a very cordial atmosphere. It was not confrontational."

The two were attending a meeting with only a few other people present, Ramos said, and the President took him aside and asked him if he could do something about the PCA.

"I said, 'Well, in the first place, I'm not connected with them but my name is being associated with them and perhaps indirectly it's because of Jun Enriquez' . . . I said, 'You must understand, Madam President, that the one who really runs PCA is not Jun Enriquez. He's already working for (Quezon City Mayor) Sonny Belmonte'."

He then told her that Montayre was the more outspoken PCA official and that the President should keep in mind that Montayre belonged to the Olaguer clan who are known "advocates and oppositors when they see a certain slowness (in reforms) and traditional politics slipping into governance."

"*Ganon ang sinabi ko* (That's what I said). And on that level of the President, the subject has been dropped," Ramos said.

On other occasions, Ramos said he would remind Ms Macapagal of the nature of the presidency.

"Every day, you get brickbats and this is part of the turf. You must learn how to ride with it, as they say ride with the punches, and counter punch at the same time . . . We have to build, we have to restore, we have to reform, and we have to get on a sustainable growth path as you have promised, Madam President. To me it's still the economy that must be given priority and long-term focus," Ramos said he told the President.

### Unsolicited advice

The man is eager to be of help to the administration.

"It is as if I'm giving unsolicited advice as an elder brother in the family," Ramos said of his role.

As soon as he arrives from a trip abroad, he submits a written report to the President on what transpired and includes his suggestions or recommendations to the government.

During a recent 12-day trip to Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and France, for instance, he gave his report the day after he arrived.

He wrote parts of the report each night, wrapped it up when he reached Manila, and then dispatched the final report to Malacañang.

One recommendation he made: "Productivity with quality and marketability should be intensified both as a culture and as a science among Filipinos if we are not to be left behind by our neighbors."

When they get to meet after he submits his reports, Ramos said the President would usually thank him and tell him she was acting on his suggestions.

"But it's not enough that she says she received it, and she read it and she's doing something. Eventually we must see some of these things on the ground," Ramos said.

He said he would occasionally check the status of his report with the President's chief of staff, lawyer Renato Corona. Corona usually digests Ramos' report, classifies his recommendations into "urgent," "mid-term" or "long-term," and then turns them over to the staff concerned.

When his recommendations seem to be ignored or not acted upon immediately, Ramos usually inserts a note in his latest report to the President: "This is my oft-repeated reminder in previous reports."

"Meaning, hey! *Hindi pa ninyo ginawa ito* (You haven't acted on this yet). Then I call up the guy who is in charge," Ramos said.

### Good relations

Ramos said he, Ms Macapagal and former President Corazon Aquino "have very good relations." Ms Macapagal usually invites the two former Presidents to Malacañang functions, including state dinners.

Ramos added that contrary to a report in another newspaper, he would never support the establishment of a civilian-military junta to replace the Macapagal administration.

"If that happens now, I'll fight them," Ramos said.

The problem with some people, he said, is that they keep waiting for a strong ruler to institute reforms in a revolutionary way, much like what Bonaparte and De Gaulle did.

"I cannot assume that role because . . . I work by patiently networking with people including the armed enemy like Nur Misuari and many others who led coup attempts during the Aquino administration. I have a habit of reaching out to the opposition. That's the technique around the world now. It's not just bombarding everybody or cutting off their heads with a magic sword. In real politics it doesn't happen that way," he said.

So if he is not running in 2004, is Lakas fielding Ms Macapagal then?

"It's not yet time (to say if this is so). She and her immediate circle of friends, family, leaders and Cabinet must not be seen by the people at this early stage to be looking fondly at the year 2004 because there are still so many problems to be solved that require multipartisan support at this time," he said.

The former general, Edsa player, AFP chief of staff, defense secretary and President said, "And these are the same things that she committed to do."

# RP-US relations now back on track

(From page A1)

out" of US military bases in the Philippines in November 1991.

But at Ricciardone's confirmation hearing, three senators—John F. Kerry (Dem., Massachusetts), Chuck Hagel (Rep., Nebraska) and Rockefeller—spent close to an hour stressing how "critically important" it was to have an American ambassador in the Philippines at this time.

They also underscored the need to support Ms Macapagal, leader of its Asian ally, citing the worsening Abu Sayyaf problem in Mindanao and the group's supposed ties to the al-Qaida terrorist network.

Presiding over the confirmation hearing, Kerry told Ricciardone he would "expedite the process" of the latter's nomination "so you can be sworn in and be on your way."

The senator was part of a team of international observers at the Philippine "snap election" that led to the overthrow of President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and the US government's enthusiastic support of President Corazon Aquino.

### Economic aid

Kerry, who compared the relationship between the Philippines and the United States to "a roller-coaster ride," promised to combine military aid to the Philippines with strong economic support.

He cited the lessons to be learned from Afghanistan, where he said the US government displayed "a lack of continued focus" after helping it achieve a military victory over Russia.

"Lack of continued focus could cost us more in the long run," he added.

Hagel told Ricciardone that the Philippines was "a very important post" and one in which "the US must be represented."

The Philippines has been without a US ambassador since Thomas C. Hubbard returned to the United States in July last year. He has since been named US ambassador to South Korea.

Noting that the kidnappings and killings attributed to the Abu Sayyaf had been going on for a long time, Rockefeller said Ricciardone's nomination was "not just timely but also critically important."

Rockefeller—who said he once served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zamboanga—told Ricciardone that he was expected to make "a very significant contribution" in addressing the Mindanao problem.

### Experience

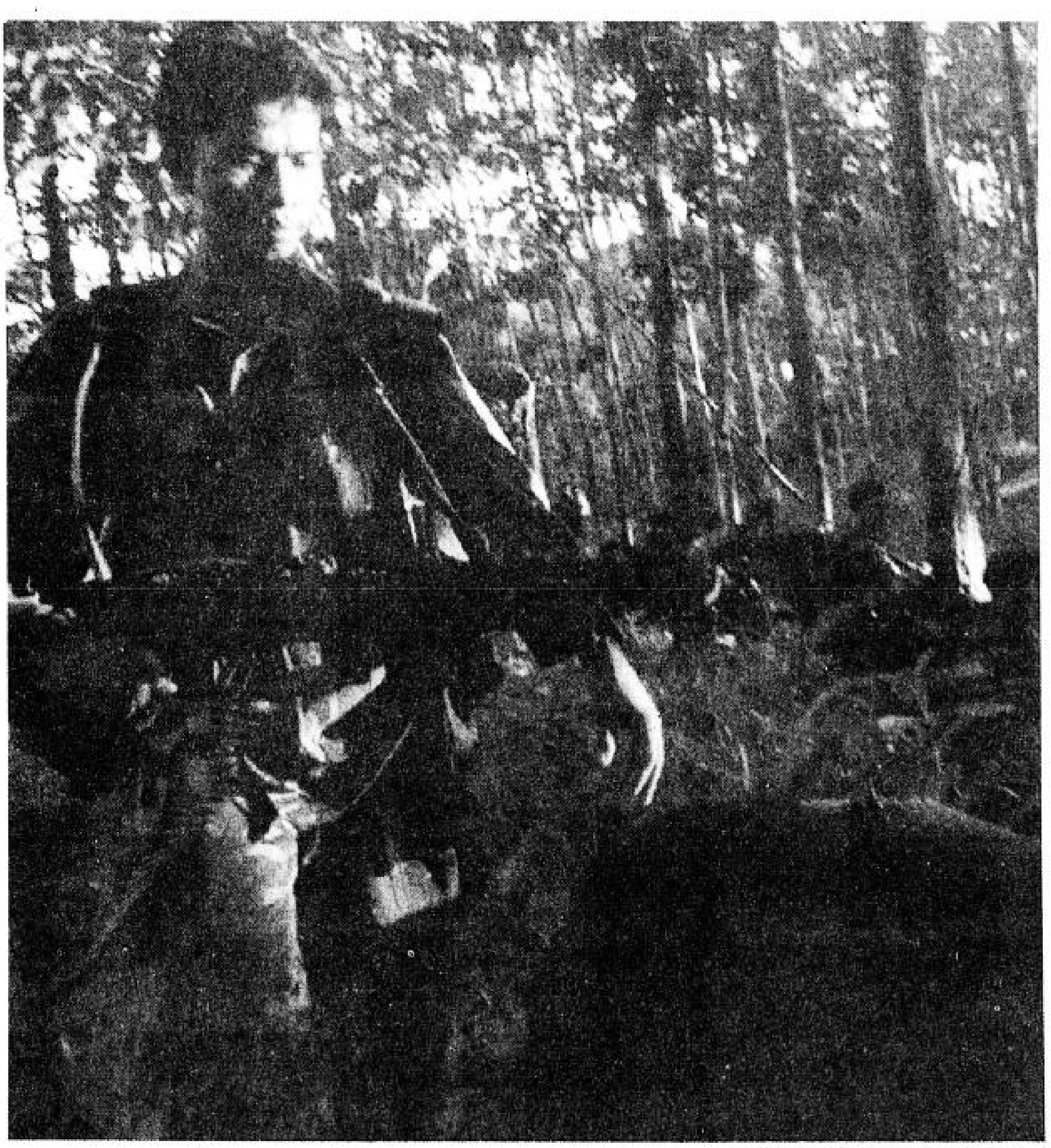
The senators agreed that Ricciardone's experience in the Middle East and knowledge of Islam were reassuring.

In his seven-page statement to the committee, Ricciardone, a 23-year veteran of the US Foreign Service, said his professional experience "should stand me in good stead for the positions to which I have been nominated." He is also envoy-designate to Palau.

Ricciardone served as deputy chief of mission and charge d'affaires in Turkey (1995 to 1999) and as chief of the civilian Observer Unit of the Multinational Force and Observers in Egypt's Sinai Desert.

He was also political adviser to the US and Turkish commanding generals of Operation Provide Comfort, which is based in Turkey and operating in Iraq.

He won a meritorious award as US Secretary of State Colin L. Powell's special coordinator for the transition of Iraq, a post that he held from March 1999 until early this year.



CHARLIE SACEDA/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

**A FIRMER** commitment of military assistance by the United States to the Philippineshas been prompted by the Macapagal administration's support in the US-led war against terrorism, particularly the Abu Sayyaf group.

Ricciardone most recently served as director of the US State Department's Task Force on the Coalition against Terrorism and as a senior adviser to the director general of the Foreign Service.

Bush nominated Ricciardone as ambassador on Nov. 14, four days before Ms Macapagal arrived in Washington on an official visit.

Ariel Y. Abadilla, charge d'affaires at the Philippine Embassy in Washington, told the INQUIRER: "It is good that we will have an ambassador soon."

He noted the Philippines already had its envoy in this US capital. Ambassador Albert del Rosario presented his credentials to Bush at the White House last Nov. 8.

### Mutual interests

"Our defense against terrorism heads the list of priority mutual interests," Ricciardone said in his testimony. "President Bush has cited President Macapagal-Arroyo's exemplary leadership in offering important political, military intelligence, and other tangible support in the worldwide coalition against terrorism."

Ricciardone agreed that economic aid should go hand in hand with military aid.

He told the INQUIRER that he was "excited about going to the Philippines" at a challenging time. He cited, among other things, his experience in Iraq in helping address internal conflicts and smoothing the way for economic transition.

Ricciardone goes to the Philippines as a crisis-tested official, albeit new to the Asia-Pacific region. He will join another newly appointed official, Deputy Chief of Mission Robert W. Fitts, who assumed his post in October.

Fitts is the former director of the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and Singapore Affairs at the US State Department.

The Philippines has been without an American ambassador for 16 months.

But Hubbard told the INQUIRER early this year that RP-US relations had not suffered because then Charge d'affaires Michael Malinowski was "doing a terrific job."

For a time, James F. Dobbins, another top diplomat and an expert in crisis situations, was being considered for the Manila post. But some Republicans led by Sen. Jesse A. Helms (North Carolina), who opposed the diplomat's actions at his previous post in Haiti, blocked Dobbins' nomination.

Dobbins is now among the US officials active in the counter-terrorism efforts in Afghanistan.

### Scholar

Ricciardone was born on Feb. 7, 1952, in Boston, Massachusetts.

He studied at Malden Catholic High School and Dartmouth College, where he graduated *summa cum laude* in 1973. After college, he went to Italy to teach and study as a Fulbright scholar.

In 1976 he went to Iran as a teacher, traveling widely in Southwest Asia, Europe and the Middle East, until he entered the Foreign Service in 1978.

In Washington, Ricciardone served in the State Department's Near East Bureau, as staff director for the Director General's Policy Coordination Office, and as political/economic officer in the Office of Lebanon, Jordan and Syrian Affairs.

He also served as international relations officer and special assistant at the Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Ricciardone speaks, apart from English, four other languages—Italian, Turkish, Arabic and French.

He is married to Dr. Marie Dunn Ricciardone, a molecular biologist in the State Department's environment office. They have two daughters—Francesca, 21, and Chiara, 18.

Ricciardone told the INQUIRER that his wife would stay with him in the Philippines during his tour of duty but that their children would remain in school in the United States.

# More . . .

(From page A1)

11 attacks in America by suspected members of the al-Qaida terrorist network.

Among the Philippines' recent acquisitions are a C-130 cargo plane, eight helicopters, trucks and firearms including sniper rifles.

The AFP has also started the bidding process for the acquisition of night-vision goggles.

# Pope issues message . . .

(From page A1)

said in his sermon that tensions in the world should not be allowed to dampen the spirit of the season.

"Our hearts this Christmas are anxious and distressed because of the continuation in various parts of the world of war, social tensions and the painful hardships in which so many people find themselves," the Pope said.

"We are seeking an answer that will reassure us," he said, appearing in relatively good health despite suffering from Parkinson's disease.

The Pope, marking the 24th Christmas season of his history-making papacy, said Christ's message of light and hope was still valid in today's troubled world.

"But does this certainty of faith not seem to clash with the way things are today?" he asked, reading his sermon in an exceptionally strong voice.

"If we listen to the relentless news headlines, these words of light and hope may seem like words from a dream. But that is precisely the challenge of faith, which makes this proclamation at once comforting and demanding," he said.

"It makes us feel that we are wrapped in the tender love of God, while at the same time it commits us to a practical love of God and of our neighbor."

### Peace building

The Pope said each person was called on to overcome iniquity and become witnesses of solidarity and builders of peace.

"Let us go then to the cave of Bethlehem to meet him, and to meet, in him, all the world's children, every one of our brothers and sisters afflicted in body or oppressed in spirit," he said.

The Pope's mind was on the Bethlehem of yesterday and the Bethlehem of today.

Hopes for peace in the Holy Land seemed as empty as Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's seat at Bethlehem's midnight Mass after Israel barred his Christmas pilgrimage to the town where Jesus was born.

The Pope led the Mass only hours after the Vatican condemned Israel's ban as "arbitrarily imposed" and said it had tried to convince the Jewish state to reverse its decision.

Security was tighter than last year following reports since the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States that the Vatican may be a target for guerrilla violence.

Throughout Monday, people entering St. Peter's Square and Basilica had to go through metal detectors and spot checks.

There was a greater number of plainclothesmen than normal, security sources said.

The Pope has said often since the Sept. 11 attacks, which the United States blames on Islamic militants, that any form of terrorism dishonors God and that religion cannot justify war and hate.

Referring to the international situation, the Polish Pontiff said there was always light at the end of the tunnel, regardless of how gloomy the world sometimes seemed.

"When darkness and evil seem to prevail, Christ tells us once more: Fear not! By coming into the world he has vanquished the power of evil, freed us from the slavery of death and brought us back to the banquet of life," he said.

Later on Tuesday, the Pope delivered his twice yearly "Urbi et Orbi" (To the city and the world) message and blessing in St. Peter's Square. ***Reuters***

# High-tech gadgets . . .

(From page A1)

nected world that was promised a year ago.

Devices such as personal digital assistants, cell phones and combinations of the two will increasingly come with built-in wireless Web access.

Laptop-toters seeking to surf the Web through wireless hubs, their options currently limited, will likely see many more places offer the service as this technology proliferates.

Now that tech jargon like MP3, DVD and PDA have entered the vernacular, the consumer electronics industry is concentrating on next-generation devices, learning from the mistakes and building on the successes of the past few years.

"Expect to see more evolutionary, rather than revolutionary devices," said Andrew Johnson, a market researcher with Gartner Dataquest.

### Breather

It's a good time for a breather, analysts say—the industry is at a crossroads, switching from analog to digital technologies, and consumers need time to fully grasp the advantages of the fancy new devices now available.

Some companies are moving cautiously after the bruising economic slowdown in 2001 depressed sales, even of popular mobile phones and handheld computers.

Consumers now tend to buy products that fill real needs—rather than dumping cash on the latest cool gadget, analysts say.

Multifunction electronic devices laden with features have not necessarily been hit products. But many high-tech companies remain optimistic that the future lies with powerful, converged devices such as refrigerators with built-in Internet access or handheld computers that also serve as a cell phone, pager, digital camera, MP3 audio player and TV remote control.

But until consumers—and not just gearheads—show a liking to these technologies, and their prices become affordable, some companies are focusing on devices that serve one function well.

The TV/VCR combination wasn't a blockbuster and is now headed in the same direction as VCRs, which have been losing ground to DVD players.

### Difficult to use

Home media servers arrived in 2001, but didn't fare well either. They digitally store songs on hard disks and have Internet and home network connectivity. But many consumers found them expensive and difficult to use.

"Consumers don't want to figure out hardware or software. They're so jaded by how hard it is to set up a computer that anything that smells like it scares them to death," said Rob Enderle, analyst with the Giga Information Group.

In 2001, some watches that were also portable music players, such as Casio's MP3 Audio Wrist Watch, became collectors items.

Internet appliances, such as Sony's eVilla or 3Com's Audrey, also vanished.

Through 2001, digital camera makers raced to improve the resolution of a picture. Now that consumer models have broken the 4- and 5-megapixel barriers, the focus will be on making cameras more affordable.

Of course that won't stop companies from introducing in coming months bleeding-edge digital cameras and camcorders that also allow Web-surfing and e-mail. ***AP***

# Andok's SJ moving to PBL in 2002

By Dennis U. Eroa

AFTER the blockbuster news out of the reported acquisition of the Tanduay PBA franchise by FedEx, another basketball news is out to shock the basketball world.

The Andok's San Juan Knights, the MBA 2000 National Finals champion, are set to jump over to the PBL backyard next year.

JAVIER

The INQUIRER learned this last night from a high-ranking PBL official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"I am not ready to divulge anything but it will not come as a surprise if San Juan will strut its wares in the PBL next year," said the source.

He said the owner of Andok's San Juan, Sandy Javier, has held exploratory talks with PBL chair Dioceldo Sy and Commissioner Chino Trinidad. They have agreed in principle that Javier's team can be accepted "without a hitch."

Andok's San Juan recently filed a leave of absence from the MBA.

Javier is known as a champion horse-breeder. He is the president of the Metropolitan Association of Racehorse Owners, a high-profile group that includes the nation's most respected personalities in horse racing.

Javier's Andok's San Juan entry into the country's premier amateur cagefest is not expected to encounter strong opposition from the PBL board since he already owns a PBL team—PharmaQuick.

"There is no doubt that Andok's San Juan is going to boost the PBL's image," said the source. ''Sandy's known for making champions. Also, the team is quite popular in the MBA."

PharmaQuick's known stalwarts were Bruce Dacia and Omanzie Rodriguez, who were Andok's players before they moved over to the PBL last year.

Another team from Cebu is also knocking on the doors of the PBL for next year's season.

# Bulls' losing season yanks out Floyd

DEERFIELD, Illinois —Tim Floyd resigned as coach of the Chicago Bulls on Monday, as the team stumbled through another losing season in the post-Michael Jordan era.

"I really tried to give my best effort, and sometimes that's not enough," Floyd said at a news conference.

The Bulls are 4-21, last in the Central Division, and have the NBA's worst record. Assistant Bill Berry was appointed interim head coach.

Floyd said he believed his move "will be the best for everybody" and wished the organization the best.

"I'm going to rebound from this and be fine. Change is not always a bad thing," he said.

But Marcus Fizer, who also played for Floyd at Iowa State University, said he was sad to see Floyd go.

"I know he's a competitor, I know he wanted to win more than anybody," Fizer said. "He came to work each and every day looking forward to winning. I personally don't know how he's lasted this long with that burden of not being able to win as many games as he'd wanted to.

"I know it was a hard decision for him," Fizer added. "Everyone does what they think is best for themselves. I can only wish him the best in life."

Floyd said he was not forced out.

FLOYD

"I did it of my own free will," he said. "This is just one of the times in my life it didn't go the way I hoped it would have gone."

This season has probably been the toughest since the breakup of the Jordan- and Phil Jackson-led teams that won six NBA titles in the 1990s.

## Issel also ready to go

**DENVER, Colorado— Two days after beginning a leave of absence, Denver Nuggets coach Dan Issel may be ready to resign. The Rocky Mountain News and the Denver Post reported on Monday that Issel and team officials are working out details of a contract buyout. Team officials did not immediately confirm the reports. Issel decided to take an indefinite leave of absence on Saturday instead of returning from a team-imposed four-game suspension for his use of an ethnic slur two weeks ago.**

TUASON (left) and Dayrit shake hands in a show of unity.

FILEPHOTO

POC-PSC YEARENDER

# *Philippine sports receives passing marks from Dayrit, Tuason*

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IF we go by the diagnoses of the top two sports officials of the land, then there's no reason to doubt the good state of health of Philippine sports.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Tuason and Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit both have generously given their passing marks for the year 2001.

Citing the diminished fundings from the yearly government budget, both officials said that everything could have been worse for the country had they not undertaken belt-tightening measures.

It's a nice excuse, but what will burn into the Filipino sports lovers' minds was the pathetic 5th-place finish for the country in the recent Southeast Asian Games.

The country only won 30 golds, 66 silvers and 67 bronzes, finishing fifth. Vietnam moved up to fourth in the overall standings.

### SEA Games bidders

Dayrit described the silvers as ''near golds because most of them were in subjective events and therefore could have gone either way had the breaks weren't hostile to us."

The POC has started preparing for the country's staging of the 2005 SEA Games after letting Brunei (199) and Vietnam (2003) take their part in the rotation. Manila last hosted the event in 1991 after hosting it for the first time in 1981.

Bidders for the 2005 SEA Games include North Cotabato through Gov. Manny Piñol, Bacolod, Pampanga and Cebu through Jonathan Guardo.

After the KL Games, both the POC and PSC were wracked by dissent from both internal and external forces.

Several athletes raised a howl over alleged anomalies within the PSC. The POC got involved in the basketball row that took months to settle when Tiny Literal finally won the BAP post upon the intercession of Fiba.

Tuason had his own share of battles. But he weathered one storm after another. He seems to have cemented his hold on his post after he had put up an aggressive brand of leadership toward the end of the year.

### Dose of attacks

But some pundits said Tuason managed to hold on because First Gentleman Mike Arroyo is his first cousin.

The POC had its own dose of attacks from controversial athletics chief Go Teng Kok. In the end, though, the Olympic movement upheld Dayrit in a vote of confidence when Go's maverick stand fizzled out in the face of a concerted effort by the assembly to unify amid adversity.

Go, whose track and field army won the most medals for the country in the last SEAG, said he's no longer interested in running for POC president.

Critics will insist 2001 was a "sick year" for Philippine sports. But surgeons from both the POC and PSC think otherwise.

As always, the prognosis will actually depend on who you consult with.

# Stroke-hit Toronto deputy coach stable

TORONTO —Toronto assistant coach Stan Albeck was hospitalized in stable condition Monday, one day after he suffered a stroke in the team's dressing room as the Raptors prepared to play the Miami Heat.

"Stan suffered a serious stroke that has presently left him paralyzed on the right side and unable to speak significantly," team physician Dr. Douglas Richards said.

He said the stroke was not life-threatening.

"We hope that he'll have a substantial recovery from his current state, but it would be speculative," Richards said.

The 70-year-old Albeck was stricken as the team gathered for a meeting.

"He sat over at Eric Montross' locker and he just didn't look well," Vince Carter said. "He was turning red. He wasn't talking. He was just sitting there. Some of the guys were making sure he was OK, and half the guys were running in either direction looking for the doctor."

Albeck, a former NBA head coach at Cleveland, San Antonio, New Jersey and Chicago, is in his second season as Lenny Wilkens' top assistant with the Raptors. He compiled a 307-265 record as a head coach and was Wilkens' assistant for four years with the Atlanta Hawks.

"I'm not a doctor, but he's an ornery guy and that is going to serve him well, and I say that with affection because he's a very tough-minded man," Wilkens said. "So hopefully, that will help a lot."

Toronto's Morris Peterson said it was hard to focus on the game, which the Raptors won 83-76, because of Albeck's illness.

"We're praying for Stan," he said. "He is a big part of this team. He's always smiling and joking around. I look forward to coming to practice because you know he's going to say something funny." *AP*

# Nets' Martin suspended, fined

NEW YORK—New Jersey Nets forward Kenyon Martin on Monday was suspended one game and fined $7,500 for a flagrant foul against Karl Malone in Saturday's National Basketball Association game against the Utah Jazz.

Martin was assessed a flagrant foul late in Saturday's loss after delivering a right forearm to the face of Malone as he drove to basket on a fastbreak in the fourth quarter.

The clothesline blow knocked Malone off balance and he fell face-first to the floor. He was on the court for a few minutes but finished the game.

Malone said after the game that he expected the NBA to take disciplinary action against Martin.

"We play a physical game, but some things don't have a place," Malone said. "I don't have anything to say about it. It will be interesting to see what happens. Nets president Rod Thorn used to be the police. He probably has a pipeline."

Martin will miss the Nets' game at Cleveland on Wednesday. *AFP*

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**PHILRACOM CHAMP**

Philracom Commissioner Felizardo R. Sevilla, Jr. (left) awards the 2001 Philracom "Sampaguita Distaff Championship" trophy to horse owner Valente "Val" Cayco following the victory of his champion race mare, Gold Edition, in the recent P1-Million "Sampaguita Distaff Championship" race at the San Lazaro Hippodrome. Among those who joined in the festivities were Manila Jockey Club Inc. (MJCI) President Alfonso "Boy" Reyno Jr. (second from left, partly hidden), race presentor Ms. Samantha Sallee and MJCI director Martin Cepeda.

# Lukas-trained colts lead Malibu

ARCADIA, California —Yonaguska and Scorpion, both trained by D. Wayne Lukas, head a field of 13 entered in Wednesday's $200,000 Malibu Stakes –feature race on opening day of Santa Anita's 65th winter/spring meeting.

Yonaguska, winner of the Fall Highweight Handicap at Aqueduct and Sport Page Handicap at Belmont Park in his last two starts, will be ridden by Gary Stevens and carry 119 pounds (53.55 kilograms) in the seven-furlong race for 3-year-olds.

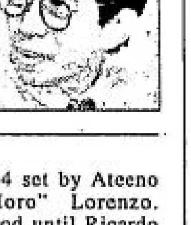
"He's coming up to the race well," Lukas said. "He had a little time off in the summer, so he's a relatively fresh horse. The Malibu is a Grade I and we like that. It's hard to pass up this opportunity."

Scorpion won the Jim Dandy at Saragota in August, but finished out of the money in three subsequent races. He will be ridden by Alex Solis and carry high weight of 121 pounds (54.45 kilograms).

Early Flyer, who will be ridden by Chris McCarron and carry 117 pounds (52.65 kilograms), figures as a threat. Early Flyer won the San Vicente Stakes at Santa Anita at seven furlongs last winter. *AP*

# Hall of fame frontrunners

**CLEAN LIVING**



*Manolo R. Iñigo*

NEXT year's National Basketball Hall of Fame induction ceremony will give us another occasion in which to view the likes of Eddie Lim, Charlie Badion, Kurt Bachmann, Loreto "Bonnie" Carbonell and Alfonso "Boy" Marquez, all of whom are superstars, athletes who gave their country many proud moments in a happy bygone era.

I have already cited—although briefly—the exemplary exploits of Lim and Badion and, most recently, the accomplishments of Bachmann. However, this added bit of information about Kurt did not see print due to space limitation. To repeat: Aside from the Olympics, World Basketball Championships, Asian Games and ABC, Kurt also excelled in the defunct MICAA, playing for multi-titled Ysmael Steel and YCO. He made the winning shot in the last five seconds of play, giving YCO its seventh straight National championship. He retired from basketball on Sept. 21, 1963. In 1996, Kurt was enshrined in La Salle's Hall of Fame.

On the other hand, Bonnie Carbonell is another cager worthy of recognition. Here's why: Bonnie, the dusky *probinsiyano* who made good in the Big City, was born on Dec. 11, 1932 in Malita, Davao del Sur, where he finished his grade school. When he transferred to the Ateneo de Davao to pursue his secondary education, Bonnie did not know how to play basketball because he was hooked on volleyball. Jesuit fathers James Donelan and Richard Cronin, an all-American basketball player, taught him the basics of basketball, including the fancy back dribbling.

After finishing high school in Ateneo de Davao, Carbonell was supposed to play for La Salle in Manila with buddies Hose Bangoy and Robert Harvey. Instead, Carbonell and Bangoy went to San Beda while Harvey went to Far Eastern University. In San Beda, Carbonell helped the Mendiola Red Lions win several National Collegiate Athletic Association titles, including the coveted Zamora Trophy. He capped his magnificent stint in the NCAA by winning Rookie of the Year honors in his maiden year in the country's most popular and colorful league. In 1955, the sweet-shooting Carbonell scored 46 points to surpass the individual scoring record of 34 set by Ateeno hotshot Luis "Moro" Lorenzo. Bonnie's record stood until Ricardo Pineda of Letran broke it by making 60 big points!

From San Beda, Carbonell played for seven-time National Open champion YCO Painters. His highest attainment was when he represented the Philippines in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, the 1958 Asian Games in Tokyo where the Filipinos emerged champions, the 1959 World Basketball Championship in Chile and the 1960 ABC cagefest in Manila where the country reigned supreme, beating Republic of China, 99-78, in the final. He credited Cornelio Rita from Davao with encouraging him to come to Manila.

* * *

**PWU IN SPORTS**. The founder of the Philippine Women's University, Conrado Benitez, former dean of the UP College of Education, was a national swimmer in the 1st Far Eastern Games hosted by Manila in 1913, competing in the 50-yard swim, 100yd backstroke and 100yd relay. Also, the daughters of the late Justice Secretary Jose Abad Santos, who was beheaded by the Japan, were PWU swimmers. These were eldest daughter Amanda, wife of lawyer Antonio Madrigal; Vicky, married to Jose "Belek" Madrigal, younger brother of Antonio; and Susana, married to car racer Mandy Eduque, nephew of noted basketball coach Tito Eduque, who died recently. Amanda and another PWU swimmer, Gloria Zablan, daughter of the late Major Porfirio Zablan for whom Zablan Air Field was named, represented the Philippines in the 10th Far Eastern games held in Manila in 1934.

* * *

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# From stunk to dunk

## Jordan makes Washington the Wizard of NBA

▣ Andok's leaving MBA for PBL A15

**NEW YORK—It was not long ago, less than a month, that Michael Jordan succinctly summed up the state of the Washington Wizards in two words: "We stink."**

Nine consecutive victories later, they don't anymore.

Jordan stood in the center of the visitors' locker room at Madison Square Garden on Sunday night, surrounded as usual by a swarm of microphones, cameras and tape recorders, and gave yet another state of the Wizards speech.

Whereas Jordan was dejected and downright angry when he uttered the "we stink" line Nov. 27 in Cleveland, on this night he had a proud and satisfied air about him.

"I think it's changing, which is what my vision has always been about this organization," Jordan said. "One of the reasons I came from upstairs downstairs was to change the attitudes about competing and winning.

"And this nine-game winning streak has given us confidence that if we believe in ourselves and do the work and collectively stay connected, we can be successful."

The nine-game winning streak is no small accomplishment for the Wizards, a franchise that has never won 10 consecutive games —even when it was based in Baltimore and Landover, Maryland, and was known as the Bullets.

### Transformation

Washington will try to make it 10 straight Wednesday night in Charlotte. The transformation of the Wizards from losers into winners has been nothing short of stunning.

Potshots were starting to fly Jordan's way as Washington got off to a 3-10 start that included an eight-game losing streak—the longest of Jordan's career. Few believed he had the kind of supporting cast capable of being a respectable team, much less a playoff contender, even in the wide-open Eastern Conference.

It all started to change after the Wizards began a four-game road trip in San Antonio, and Jordan sat out with a sore knee. He returned two nights later in Houston, and the Wizards haven't lost since.

Their victims during the streak have been Dallas, Houston, Memphis, Miami, New York (twice), Toronto and Atlanta. And the leading scorer for the Wizards during their streak has been Richard Hamilton, not Jordan.

"Each and every game, we're learning how to play with each other. Not just me learning how to play with him, but him learning how to play with me," Hamilton said.

### A dozen games

Hamilton said that earlier in the season, the offense tended to grind to a halt whenever the ball ended up in his hands or in Jordan's hands.

During practice, the team always ran the offense correctly. The problem, though, is that Jordan does not practice because of his knee condition.

So when Jordan joined the team for games, what worked in practice didn't carry over.

It took the team about a dozen games to learn to do things the right way - and to listen to what Jordan was telling them.

"We're playing hard, and when you're playing hard you get rewarded," Jordan said. "That's one of the things I kept trying to say last year when we were probably more talented than we are this year."

Jordan often was revolted at the lack of effort the Wizards displayed last season, but if his words didn't exactly fall on deaf ears, they fell on reluctant ones. It's one thing to have the boss complaining from afar—especially with the scant amount of time Jordan actually spent in Washington last season. It's quite another to have him on the team, in the locker room, in uniform and drawing sellout crowds wherever the team plays.

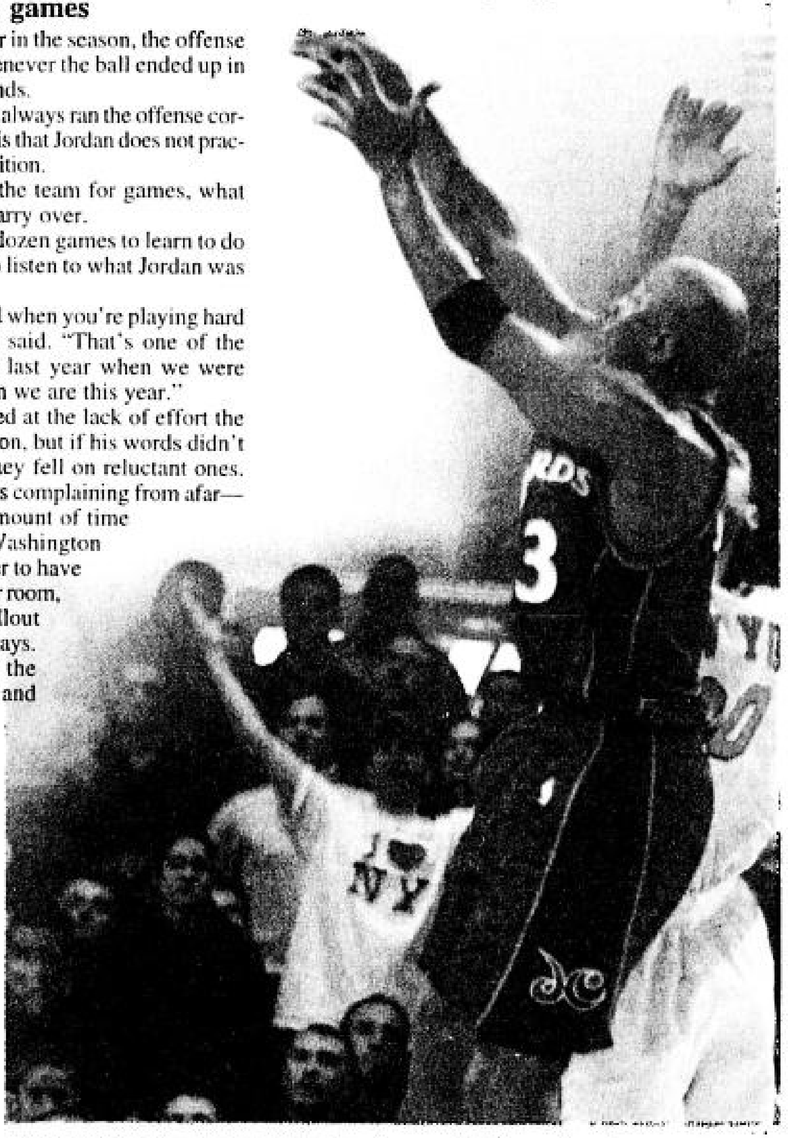
"Coming down out of the front office to show them and be a part of it, I think they're starting to understand it and I'm very happy with the way they've received it," Jordan said.

"Losing eight games in a row and coming back and winning nine, something has changed. And I think a lot of that has to be the comfort of playing alongside of me and the confidence of them understanding how to play with me has made a great difference in our success."

A great difference, indeed.

With the San Antonio Spurs having had their 10-game winning streak snapped by Milwaukee on Sunday night, there is no NBA team with a longer unbeaten string than the Wizards.

"We stink" no longer applies. *AP*



**JORDAN** in his patented pull up jumper that usually wins games. AP

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# Jacobs in hospital?

**SPECTATOR**

*Al S. Mendoza*

IS it true? Is Ron Jacobs at the hospital? Confined at the ICU at that? Intubated? Prey to a massive stroke?

Say it ain't so, Rufo.

Gosh it pains me writing this. Ron Jacobs and I go a long way, fellas. But it's a job I have to do. Public interest demands that I do it. My, what a time to do it. Why it had to happen now, only God knows. Suddenly, I feel like hating my profession.

But it's gotta be done.

God knows it's gotta be done.

Rufo, my legman of 12 months, knows it's gotta be done.

I got it from unimpeachable sources that Ron Jacobs, that affable coach of the Philippine Team bound for the Asian Games next year, suffered a cerebral hemorrhage dawn of Dec. 23. He was driving his car when it happened. His companion brought him to Medical City in Pasig City. From there, he was transferred to St. Luke's Hospital in Quezon City, where he remains comatose at presstime.

"He suffered what we call in medical lingo CVA," said a doctor-friend of mine who holds clinic at St. Luke's. "CVA means cerebro vascular accident."

CVA is serious stuff. If you survive it, they put you at the hospital ICU (intensive care unit) and place you into a 24-hour guard. Sadly, while there, you only hang on perilously to a flimsy thread of life. You breathe through a machine support.

St. Luke's administration officials neither confirm nor deny the sad news. But aside from my doctor-friend, I have two more vouching for the veracity of the report.

I was torn between the need to write this and the option to ignore it. But ignoring it would mean shirking my responsibility to report what is of public interest. Ron Jacobs is a national figure, the coach of the national basketball team. Basketball being the national pastime, the public ought to know what's happening to their favorite sport, to their national coach.

Maybe, this piece will incur the ire of some basketball bigwigs, particularly those who, for one reason or another, wanted desperately to hide the news from hounds like me. I can understand. Any sad news deepens the grief of those directly affected by it.

My apologies.

My fate.

But here's hoping for a speedy recovery for Ron. I'm also hoping that my unimpeachable sources suddenly become impeachable.

God have mercy.

## SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

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US NCAA—Texas vs UNLV at 1 p.m. (r) on ESPN
**BILLIARDS:** 2001 Wheel Chair Billiards at 12 noon (r) on ESPN
**GOLF:** PGA National Car Rental Classic, Third Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
**TENNIS:** Best of Wimbledon 2001 at 10 p.m. on Star Sports
**ICE SKATING:** Sparkassen Cup on Ice 2001 Highlights #3 at 9 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

## BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1993, Dan Nietes knocked out Noli Cabatu in the second round to retain his Philippine flyweight crown at the Almendras Gym in Davao City.

Also today in 1994, Antonio Alcasid Jr. steered Crown Colony to a winning time of 1:45 flat to rule the Carlsberg Beer Century Cup at Santa Ana Park.

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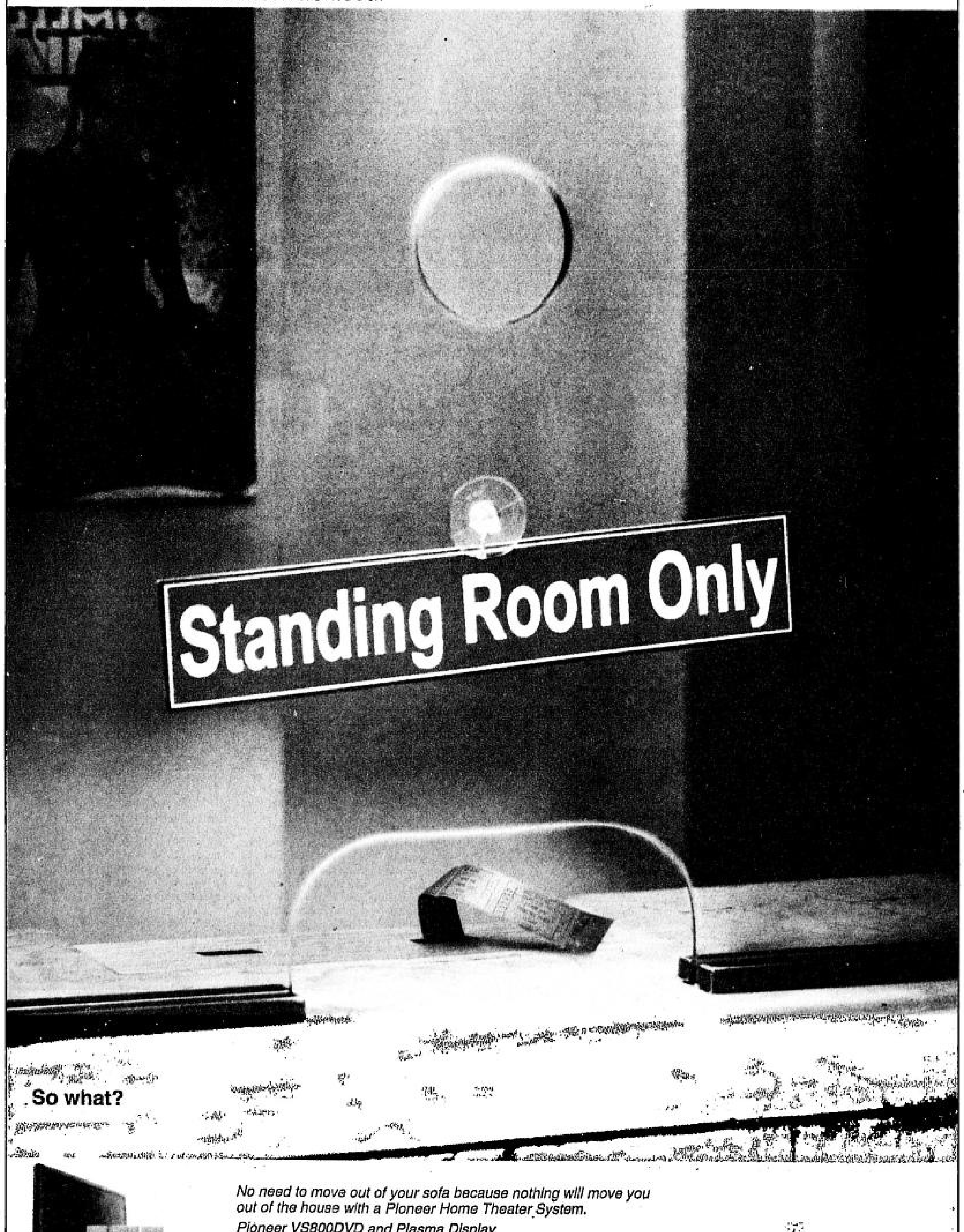

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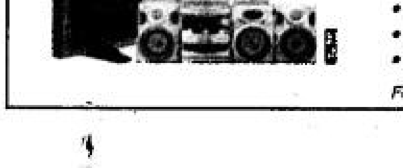
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Bare Eye: No tears for Mark 'The Spark' Caguioa A18

# METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Rizal mayor: 'Only a court order can stop landfill opening' A18

# Makati bankers to pull out of city over trade tax hike

By Alcuin Papa

**MAKATI City-based bankers are thinking of transferring their bases of operations to other cities or municipalities if the Makati city government pursues its plan to raise business taxes in the city.**

The Bankers Association of the Philippines said raising business taxes in the city will be "inopportune" because of the current financial crisis.

The bankers also pointed out that the planned increase of business taxes, contained in a draft ordinance pending before the Makati City Council, will amount to three times the present rate, which is 15 percent of one percent of their gross annual receipts.

Under the proposed tax hikes, this rate will go up to 50 percent of one percent of their gross receipts from the year 2002 to 2004. In 2005, the rate will go up again by 70 percent of one percent of gross receipts.

Should the proposed increases be implemented, Makati City will have the second highest business tax rate among the 17 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila, second only to the city of Manila, according to Mike Andaya of the BAP.

"At present, we are studying our options," Andaya said. "We think it will be okay to raise the taxes, but not at this time because of the financial crisis."

He added the general consensus among BAP members was to ask the council "to defer" the increases.

Andaya said one of the options of the bankers is to move their bases of operations to Muntinlupa, which has lower business tax rates.

The bankers presented their arguments on the planned increases in last week's public hearing.

In the proposed ordinance, the city government will raise business taxes by as much as three percent of the business' annual gross receipts depending on the kind of business.

But the city council agreed with the bankers' arguments, said City Secretary lawyer Rogelio Marasigan. He said the city council, the bankers and other parties involved will try to work out a compromise on the issue. One of the proposed compromises, Marasigan said, is to maintain the current rates.

Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay said in a radio interview that various groups affected by the tax hikes have asked him to defer the proposed increases. Binay said he will talk to the council and ask them to reconsider the plan to raise taxes.

Earlier, Marasigan had argued that it was time for a raise, since the city had not increased its business taxes since Makati became a city.

He said that the revenues from the increases would help fund the various projects of the city government for poor residents. Makati had recently increased real estate taxes in the city despite arguments presented by landowners.

THESE things that go boom have caused thousands to lose their lives and limbs through the years. Now, health officials hope to keep down the number of victims of firecracker blasts. FILE PHOTO

# *DOH hopeful there will be fewer victims of firecrackers this year*

By Armand N. Nocum

FEWER number of people have been taken to hospitals for firecracker-related injuries during the Yuletide revelries this year as compared to previous years, and health officials are optimistic this trend will continue until the New Year.

Dr. Ladislao Yuchongco Jr., national head of the Health Emergency Management Staff (HEMS), said their records as of yesterday noon showed that nobody in Metro Manila or the provinces have been injured by firecracker blasts.

"We have no record of injuries today," he said. But he admitted they are still collating injury figures from the provinces.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit has tasked the HEMS to implement the DOH's Oplan Iwas-Paputok 2001 program.

Earlier, Dayrit predicted fewer pyrotechnics-related injuries due to the economic crunch and people's heightened awareness of the dangers of firecrackers.

Contacted while he was checking out the situation in Malolos, Bulacan, Yuchongco said he was surprised that even in the country's firecracker-capital, no major injuries were reported.

Yuchongco was told that even with firecrackers there being cheap and in abundance, people resorted to making noises through their stereos or spending hard-earned money on food and gifts.

"I have nothing to report," Yuchongco said. "This is really the good news. This is the best Christmas we ever had.

He noted that normally, as far as Metro Manila is concerned, there would already be reports of hundreds of people injured from firecracker blasts from Dec. 21 to 26.

Last year, a total of 1,328 were injured from firecrackers all over the country. More than half of this figure came from Metro Manila.

Yuchongco said that with the low injury rate recorded so far, they are optimistic of achieving Dayrit's effort to cut the national figure by half this year. But he said they are still keeping their fingers crossed, considering that 90 percent of the injuries happen between Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

He assured that the 20 private hospitals in Metro Manila and 50 DOH affiliated hospitals all over the country continue to be on "code white" until after New Year to attend to cases involving firecracker blasts.

He said Dayrit himself would start making the rounds of the hospitals on Dec. 31.

Yuchongco also warned people against burning used automobile tires on New Year's eve, saying that this can cause serious lung injuries.

"We are now going to be strict on this matter," he said. "We have coordinated with the police and we will not hesitate to apprehend people doing so."

# CIDG takes over probe of Strawberry slay case

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE CRIMINAL Investigation and Detection Group has taken over the investigation of the killing of former child actress Strawberry, police said.

The family of Strawberry, whose real name is Anouk Baldo, was apparently not convinced that local police could solve her killing early last week, an official of the Las Piñas police told the Inquirer.

"It's sad that they don't seem to have confidence on our ability to solve the case," the official said. "They don't know that we're doing our best."

Members of Las Piñas police are now acting as a support group for the CIDG in investigating Strawberry's fatal shooting following a petty traffic altercation on Tuesday last week, the official said.

On Sunday, members of the CIDG went to the Las Piñas police headquarters to get documents and other pertinent materials on the investigation, the official said.

The police officer said Baldo's family "did not cooperate with the investigation from the very beginning."

Las Piñas authorities, he said, had been waiting for the Baldos to come to them right after Strawberry was shot three times in the head during the traffic altercation between the group of her boyfriend Mark Doromal and the family of businessman Raynaldo Picar at BF Executive Village.

But no one from the Baldo family paid them a visit to help shed light on the investigation, he said.

But the family of Picar went to police right after the incident and volunteered to undergo paraffin tests to prove their innocence in the killing of Strawberry.

Doromal, however, only surfaced a few days after the incident, bolstering speculations that it was his group that accidentally shot and killed Strawberry.

The Las Piñas official said Strawberry's family should not feel that the investigation on her death would lead to nowhere under the local police. Las Piñas police now have key witness whose account of the incident paved the way for the filing of criminal charges against Doromal and his four security aides.

Doromal and his aides were slapped with attempted murder charges for allegedly firing at the Picars during the traffic altercation. His compan-

CIDG TAKES/ A18

# Hope for SSPE children in this season of cheers

By Mandy Navasero

CHRISTMAS is for children. But for Danila Mae "Nessie" Mendoza, the season might pass without cheer and joy.

Mendoza is suffering from subacute sclerosing pancephalitis or SSPE. In first world countries, only one in a million is afflicted with it.

SSPE is the late complication of measles, the common childhood disease. It is slowly developing but regarded as a fatal condition, which occurs 10 years or so after a measles infection. Its onset comes within five to 20 years of age among predominantly male patients.

SSPE manifests itself with subtle behavioral changes, and only when the disease is already in its advanced stage. Children suffering from it will experience mounting difficulties in school.

As the disease progresses, behavior becomes bizarre. There is rhythmic jerking of the body every few seconds, seizures and the beginnings of an abnormal gait. The patient then becomes rigid or flaccid, developing dementia and stupor. The patient then sinks into a coma before dying.

First world countries are able to avoid this tragic complication of measles because children are vaccinated in infancy.

DANILA MAE MENDOZA

At present, there are 12 children diagnosed with the disease at the PGH Department of Neuro-Sciences under the Department of Pediatrics. Their families are all in need of financial assistance and disease education to enable them to provide support and comfort to their sick children.

This Christmas may not be as abundant as in the previous years. Those of us who continue to enjoy relatively good health and are secure in our jobs and businesses will surely continue to celebrate the passing of another year with thankful joy. But for families of these sick children despair for their health, having not enough money to buy medicines.

The SSPE Children Care Foundation has been established and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission after we saw a growing number of children afflicted with the late complication of measles, as in the case of Jon-Jon Gutierrez and Raul Abarri, SSPE patients that the foundation assists.

Over dzRH, we dramatized the case of Jon-Jon with the help of Belinda Cunanan, who is our foundation's treasurer. While only one in a million children in First World countries may die of SSPE, countless children will die undiagnosed in developing countries like in the Philippines.

It is for this reason that we are determined to raise funds to provide information regarding measles and its late com-

HOPE FOR SSPE/ A18

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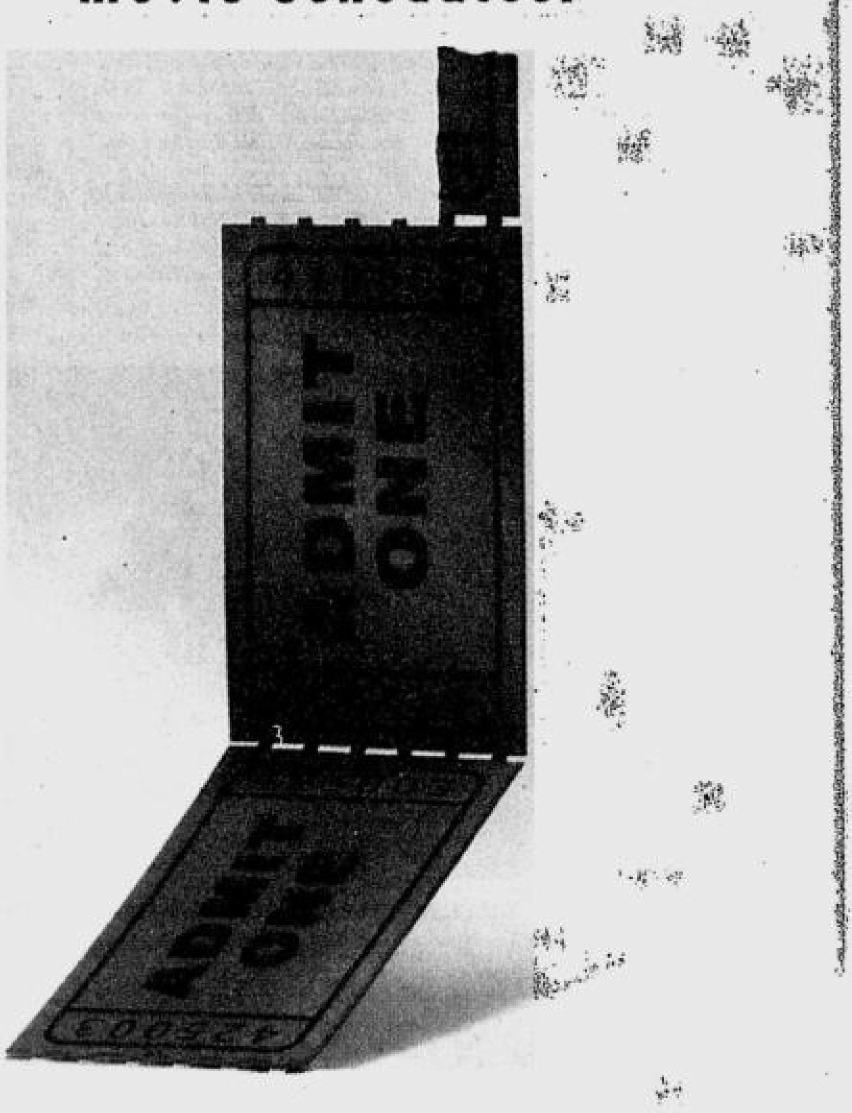

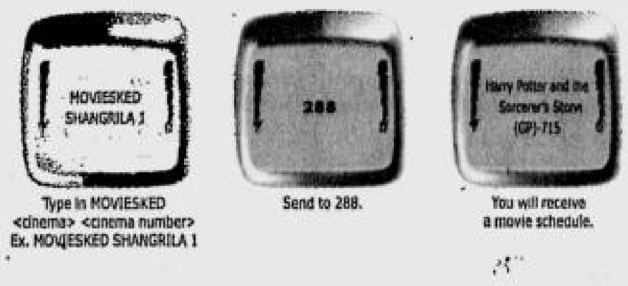

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# Rizal mayor: 'Only a court order can stop landfill opening'

By Nelson Flores

"ONLY a court order can stop us from opening the municipal sanitary landfill."

This was the defiant statement of Pedro Cuerpo, the mayor of Rodriguez town in Rizal, after his political opponents renewed their call for a municipal-wide referendum to determine the fate of the landfill.

Cuerpo said no referendum can stop the opening of the sanitary landfill scheduled at the end of the year.

Cuerpo said organizers of the People's Initiative Para sa Reporma Laban sa Basura have failed to come up with evidence to warrant the closing of the landfill.

He also accused his opponents of trying to mislead Rodriguez town residents by deliberately portraying the landfill as just a mere dumpsite.

"Without explaining the bright side and the numerous benefits the project will bring to our town, my opponents just keep on harping on the supposed ill effects of the landfill," Cuerpo said.

According to Cuerpo, the sanitary landfill will bring in P4 billion for the town in three years—more than enough to develop the town into a bustling municipality of Rizal province.

He said the municipal budget comes to about P85 million annually.

Cuerpo said the construction of a 30-meter wide service road leading to the dumpsite, located at Sitio Lukutang Malaki, Barangay San Isidro, will open the municipality to development at no expense to local residents. He said the road, which would be built at a cost of at least P130 million, will also serve as an alternative route to the municipality.

"This road will pave the way for the development of a road system in the municipality," Cuerpo said.

There is currently only one road leading to Rodriguez and that is the narrow national highway, which has become prone to traffic congestion.

Once the road system is improved, development will surely come forth, Cuerpo added.

But Lito San Jose, former vice mayor of Rodriguez and organizer of the People's Initiative, insisted that Rodriguez residents must be given the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they want Metro Manila's waste in their town.

San Jose claimed the construction of the landfill is illegal since it has no environmental clearance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

San Jose said Cuerpo and his political allies in the municipal council ignored all opposition to the setting up of a sanitary landfill despite mounting public protest.

He said despite the popular clamor, the municipal council agreed to allow the operation of the landfill.

"Only three out of the 10 councilors voted against the landfill," San Jose said.

After the mayor "railroaded" his plan to set up a landfill in their town and ignored the people, San Jose said he decided to organize the People's Initiative pursuant to Sections 120 to 127 of the Local Government Code. He said that initiative is the last legal remedy open to the people.

"We have 1,600 signatories to our petition, more than enough to force the municipal council of Rodriguez to enact an ordinance calling for a plebiscite," San Jose said.

The municipality of Rodriguez has 63,000 registered voters.

Opposition to the landfill has led the chair of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority to believe there is a concerted effort to sabotage plans to construct the Rodriguez, Rizal facility.

MMDA chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. suspected that proponents of other methods of waste disposal may be behind the opposition. He then cited the erroneous reports about the landfill as proof.

Abalos explained that the proposed landfill site is 20 kilometers away from the town proper, far from any local river or waterways so that it poses no danger to people and the environment, contrary to the claims made by the landfill opponents.

# No tears for Mark 'The Spark' Caguioa

**BARE EYE**

*Recah Trinidad*

I SHOULD be feeling bad. I should slam the door. And ask for the head of Ron Jacobs, the national basketball team coach.

It's unfair what Jacobs had done before Christmas.

He could have waited at least a few more days before making the announcement.

I should be hollering in protest.

Why? Because Mark Caguioa, the most sensational young player to stun crowds in the PBA this year, had been given his walking papers.

Mark, 22, has just lost his chance to represent the country in next year's Asian Games in Pusan.

Don't know how Jacobs worded his order. Maybe he tried to do it gently, like a seasoned diplomat.

Still, I would try to ask Mark how Jacobs told him that he no longer wants to see his heavily tinted haircut during the national team tryouts.

* * *

**But do I really feel bad?**

**Sorry folks, but I'm just fine.**

**The moment I read that Caguioa had been scratched from the tryouts, I shrugged my shoulder.**

**I was the least surprised.**

**OK. The kid oozes with talent.**

**He was an overwhelming choice as PBA Rookie of the Year.**

**Caguioa's stardom, in fact, was readily confirmed by my friends at the PBA Press Corps when they next anointed him as the pro league's Mr. Quality Minutes.**

**Yes, Mark has made us mighty proud.**

**His grandma, Rosie Alfonso Caguioa, is my first cousin. Mark, in short, is Chino's dear nephew.**

**His fame has made us his barrio mates here in Vergara in Mandaluyong very excited.**

**But I let me make a confession. I had predicted, well ahead of others, that Mark would not make it to the RP national basketball team proper.**

* * *

Why? Because he's incapable of playing solid, decent defense, I had told Mark's cousins, my grandchildren, nearly two months ago.

As expected, there were protestations. They all thought I was being unkind.

But I reminded them that, just like with his father, they had viewed and savored Mark's delightful game only on the offensive side of the court.

The kid was simply unpalatable on defense. He was a tired, tough, tasteless steak.

His defense was atrocious. He could not even go low before his man, his legs often get crossed and, to top it all, he makes it a habit to leave his man and try to provide help when it is least necessary.

Then, to cap my tiny treatise, I told these younger relatives of mine that, if Jacobs would ever have any use for Mark, it would be in demonstrating how not to play defense.

I had been mean. But I just found Mark's defense truly indefensible.

* * *

**You see, the last time we residents of Vergara and Namayan by the Pasig celebrated a star of Caguioa's worth, it was in the days of Olympian Narciso Bernardo, who burned the gravel roads with his bare feet vending ice drop.**

**Unlike Mark, Bernardo, now a Mandaluyong councilor, however functioned on both ends of the court with equal intensity and facility.**

**Of course, Caguioa could have made at least to the second phase of the RP team tryouts.**

**But only if it was not Jacobs who was making the choice.**

**Yes, Caguioa could have been appointed as a shock trooper, but only if it was a Filipino mentor who was supervising the national team tryout.**

**Unfortunately, as Jacobs would explain, it was not only Caguioa's anemic defense which had made him unfit for the Asiad campaign.**

**"Although he was the only player we had who could penetrate, nothing happened against big men and, as a result, he made some bad decisions," Jacobs said in a stark assessment of Caguioa's worth.**

* * *

I have again opened myself to criticism. But, after he had disqualified Caguioa, I could say that Jacobs indeed knows what he's doing.

Caguioa's case is a strong statement against the brand of basketball made popular by our overpaid pros.

Mark's exclusion from the national squad was Jacobs way of stressing that the PBA, the way it plays now, is itself unfit for the Asiad campaign.

Jacobs did not say this. But taking in Caguioa would've been equal to hiring a truck mechanic to fine-tune the piano.

After the Caguioa ouster, Jacobs could be expected to make more unpopular moves.

But those who truly care for the game here, the PBA diehards included, need not feel bad.

Jacobs, with his dedication, is out to put together an entirely different basketball machine.

It would not have the shooters of Caguioa's sparkling style.

But you can bet Jacobs would not be caught hiring a carpenter to cook the feast for a national banquet.

Still you're free to wonder: Why have we again allowed an American to prepare a Filipino team for a most important international campaign?

Sorry, but the way things are shaping up, the RP national basketball team will look anything but truly Filipino.

## THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, December 26, 2001
St. Stephen, First Martyr

**1st Reading:** Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59
**Gospel:** Mt 10:17-22

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be on your guard with respect to people, for they will hand you over to their courts and they will flog you in their synagogues. You will be brought to trial before rulers and kings because of me, and so you may witness to them and the pagans.

But when you are arrested, do not worry about what you are to say and how you are to say it; when the hour comes, you will be given what you are to say. For it is not you who will speak; but it will be the Spirit of your Father in you.

Brother will hand over brother to death, and a father his child; children will turn against parents and have them put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me, but whoever stands firm to the end will be saved."

**Commentary:**

*This gospel seems so abrupt in coming right after Christmas day, as is the feast of Saint Stephen, the first martyr of the Church. But really, this is all in consonance with the Christmas message. In yesterday's gospel we read: "He came to his own, yet his own people did not receive him." But we are also told, "But all who received him he empowers to become children of God." When Christ comes into the lives of people, they must make a decision: to receive or reject him. Saint Stephen's martyrdom graphically illustrates this. And you, what decision have you made regarding Christ?*

***Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)***

# Robbers sweep clean Antipolo post office

By Nelson Flores

ROBBERS broke into the Antipolo City post office and stole 69,000 in cash and valuables contained in Christmas parcels, according to a belated police report.

Police said the disappearances of the missing items were discovered Friday morning while post office personnel were preparing for the day's work.

SPO1 Errol Era, Antipolo City police station desk officer, said the robbers apparently hid inside one of the rooms of the post office, located at the eastern portion of the Antipolo City Hall, on Thursday night.

Era said there were indications that the robbers managed to elude post office security employees before they closed the office for the night.

Era said the post office safety box, where the cash was located, was forcibly opened and the store room was also looted.

He added the robbers escaped by sawing the iron grills of one of the windows of the post office.

Era said investigators are set to invite post office employees to determine whether an insider helped those who robbed the post office.

# QC dad to traders: 'Raise your tax base or else...'

By Agnes E. Donato

A QUEZON City councilor has dared business establishments in the city to declare more than 30 percent of their tax base and, in return, the city will not review their books.

Quezon City Councilor Victor Ferrer Jr. proposed this scheme to encourage business owners in the city to declare a bigger tax base that will translate into bigger tax revenues for the city government.

In his proposed ordinance, Ferrer urged the City Council to grant business taxpayers, who declare an additional 30 percent of their tax base, exemption from government inspection of their business records, books and other documents.

By granting such an exemption, the local government can also lessen the workload of personnel at the treasurer's office, "whose time and energy may be utilized for some other purpose beneficial to their respective departments," Ferrer said.

If passed, Ferrer's ordinance will exempt all individuals, partnerships or corporations once they have presented proof of payment for the present and preceding taxable years.

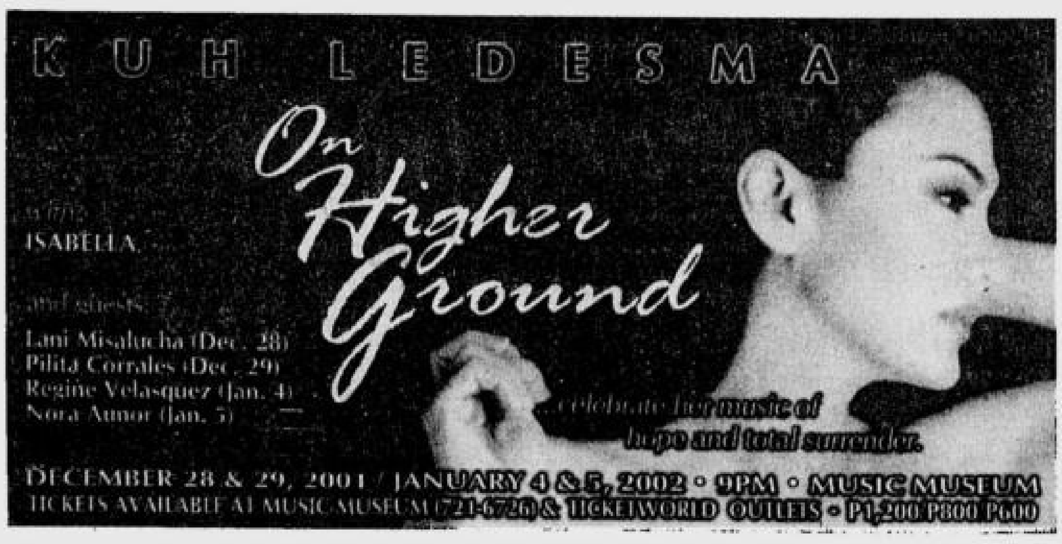
Ferrer said no exemptions will be given to those who have pending cases or have been convicted in relation to their business records, books or other similar documents.

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. also reiterated that the city government will not grant any amnesty on tax delinquencies. He also ordered the inspection of business establishments and residential buildings to prevent the occurrence of fire similar to the one that razed the Manor Hotel early this year and the Ozone Disco in 1996.

In his report to the mayor, public order and safety chief Manuel Sabalza disclosed that 45 of the 129 establishments inspected by his team have been found to be "hazardous or high-risk."

Sabalza said these establishments have already been referred to the city building official for revalidation.

He added the Business Permits and Licensing Office as well as the fire, health and engineering departments have recommended the closure of several of these establishments.



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# Luckless man shot over 'cara y cruz'

THE GAMES of chance called "cara y cruz" nearly cost the life of a luckless, jobless man when he was shot by a Makati City policeman over how the game was played on Christmas Eve.

Jimmy Roque, 32, of Pateros Street, Barangay Olympia, Makati City, is now in critical condition at the Ospital ng Makati after he was shot in the head. PO3 Angelito Ocampo, assigned to the Southern Police District, escaped immediately after the incident, police said.

According to PO3 Rio Bucalan of the Makati City Police homicide division, Roque was gambling with the suspect's son in front of the victim's house about 4:30 a.m. when the victim was accused of cheating. PO3 Ocampo's son went running to his father saying Roque had cheated him.

Ocampo confronted Roque on the matter and, as they argued, the suspect apparently became fed up, pulled out his service pistol and shot the victim, police said. Ocampo fled as Roque was taken to the hospital. Police are now looking for the fugitive lawman. *Alcuin Papa*

# CIDG takes . . .

(From page A17)

ions were identified as security guards Marfie Arabani, Felicisimo Mardarlipe, Rex Tanduyan, and Alexander Memis.

Strawberry died two days after she was shot in the head during the altercation between Doromal's group and the Picars. She was 25.

The witness has confirmed the Picars' version of the incident and claimed the Picars and Doromal's group that included Strawberry had a heated argument at the gate of BF Executive Village early last Tuesday. The witness said Doromal lured the Picars to run after him toward a dark portion near the village gate.

When the Picars fell for the ruse, gunshots were fired coming from the direction of Doromal's group, the witness told police.

The Picars had told police that they retreated back to the village gate where they chanced upon Strawberry, driving a Mitsubishi Lancer toward the dark portion where Doromal had run. The witness told police more shots were fired, hitting the car Strawberry was driving.

# Hope for ...

(From page A17)

plications resulting in severe health impairment and early death possibly from SSPE.

Mothers are encouraged to bring their babies, aged between 9 and 12 months for anti-measles vaccines, and booster shots for children aged between 4 and 5. Anti-measles vaccination for mothers, who are six months away from pregnancy would also be given.

Our second purpose is to provide medical assistance to children who are in the early stages of SSPE in the hope of a recovery or as supportive therapy.

Parents have written requesting assistance for their children like Nessie, of Blk 28, Lot 15, SSBDE Village Western Bicutan, Taguig; 18-yeard-old Leander A. Ambida, of Northern Samar. Both have SSPE III-B.

We appeal to your kindness and generosity in sharing whatever you can in cash, which can be deposited at SSPE Children Care Foundation Current Account No. 0291-0369-96 at BPI Forbes Park Branch. We need donors for IVIG vials at P3,500 per vial of 2,500 mgs.

At Vizcarra Pharmaceuticals, each child needs 5 vials per day for five straight days or depending on their weight.

They also need tegretol, rivotril, isonisoprene, wheelchairs, cotton, bethadine, alcohol, disposable and milk. Ensure is the milk formula prescribed by doctors for rapid weight increase. We also welcome blenders, as most of the children are on tube feeding, and vitamins. Or you can call us at 522-1905, 522-5189 or 522-5185.

## SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

**CIVIL LAW (LAND TITLES AND DEEDS)—Action for reconveyance of property**—An action for reconveyance of a property is the sole remedy of a landowner whose property has been wrongfully or erroneously registered in another's name after one year from the date of the decree so long as the property has not passed to an innocent purchaser for value. The action does not seek to reopen the registration proceeding and set aside the decree of registration but only purports to show that the person who secured the registration of the property in controversy is not the real owner thereof. Fraud is a ground for reconveyance. For an action for reconveyance based on fraud to prosper, it is essential for the party seeking reconveyance to prove by clear and convincing evidence his title to the property and the fact of fraud. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Puno, First Division, Abejaron v. Nabasa, G.R. No. 84831, June 20, 2001]

Digest by R.B. Vera

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# *Family longs for missing Nida witness*

By Agnes E. Donato

"I JUST want my son back, dead or alive."

This is the only wish of Teresita Martinez on her family's first Christmas without her son Michael, the missing witness in the Nida Blanca murder case.

Michael Martinez, who was tagged by Philip Medel as his contact in Blanca's killing, was reportedly abducted from the Sun Valley Subdivision on the morning of Nov. 19.

"All I ask the people who are holding Michael captive is to release him as soon as possible," the distressed mother told the Inquirer in a phone interview. "I'm sure they know deep in their hearts that my son is innocent."

Mrs. Martinez said her family missed Michael terribly. She added her son was very close to his siblings as well as his nephews and nieces.

Michael is married but does not have children.

"We are deeply saddened that nothing has been heard of Michael, even after we sought the help of the authorities," Mrs. Martinez said.

A Quezon City regional trial court judge had earlier granted the petition for writ of habeas corpus filed by the Martinez family, and ordered Philippine National Police officials to produce the missing man.

But the police did not comply and filed instead a motion for reconsideration with the Court of Appeals.

Mrs. Martinez said her family had also asked the Department of Interior and Local Government and other government institutions for help.

The family has yet to hear from local government officials.

The mother said she and the rest of her family do not know where they can pin their hopes. "Sometimes, we would just stare at one another in frustration."

She added all she wanted right now was to find Michael—dead or alive—for "closure."

"We just hope God will touch the hearts of the people who are keeping my son and guide them to put things straight," she said.

"All we want is some peace."

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# Buckle up and don't use that phone

By Silverio F. Aquino

"IF YOU drive, buckle up and don't use that (cellular) phone; otherwise, don't drive."

Government has recognized the risks related to driving without seatbelts or while using cellular phones. In fact, to protect motorists from themselves and prevent them from hurting other people, Congress has passed laws requiring the use of seatbelts by drivers and their passengers, and prohibiting motorists from using their phones while driving.

But the authorities seem to have difficulties in enforcing the law. I drive around a lot, but I have not yet seen anyone arrested for driving while using a cell phone, or driving without the seatbelt fastened.

What I see are posters put up on Edsa and other main roads reminding the public of the Republic Act on seatbelts and urging people to buckle up.

I am not sure if these posters can bring about the desired effect on motorists.

## A man, his wife and a cop

There is a story about the patrol cop driving behind a car on the highway. He spotted a pair of feet pointed to the rear view mirror of the car. He overtook the car and motioned the driver, who turned out to be a woman, to move to the curb. All he wanted was to find out if she had a problem.

When the car stopped, the man inside sat up and explained that he laid low because he could not sit up to watch his wife drive. A husband himself, the cop understood and smiled. But he noticed that the wife appeared to be a competent driver, and so before he could wave her to move on, the cop told the man he should feel lucky to have such a good driver.

The man agreed, but added, "I should not be scared, but she's been yapping on her cell phone since we left home." The cop issued the wife a ticket.

That story illustrates the difficulty of enforcing the law, unless the enforcer has a witness who, in our story, happened to be a frightened husband.

## On streets with no cops

On the highways where there are no enforcers, a motorist can drive on merrily, talking in his cell phone and without his seatbelt on. In the city, a violator can still do his thing because his windows are tinted and closed.

The best solution is in education. The message and purpose of the law must be brought home to the traveling public. The lessons must be hammered in the minds of the people so they will know the risks they are up against.

But the problem is, whenever a serious accident happens, the public is usually told only about the mangled bodies and vehicles and the possibility that the driver had dosed off or was intoxicated or his brakes had failed.

The people are not told whether the victim did not have his seatbelt on or was using his cell phone at the time of the smash-up. Yet, it is quite possible any one or both of these things was the cause of the accident.

## When in Subic

The benefit of educating the motoring public is evident in Subic. We "outsiders" are amazed at the discipline of the enforcers and motorists there, and how diligently they observe the rules including those on the use of seatbelts and the non-use of cell phones.

A young man I know did not believe in the use of seatbelts before. He refused to wear them.

After a party one night, he became curious about his seatbelt. Seeing no one around, he sat down in his car, put them on and proceeded toward home. As he drove through New Manila in Quezon City where the intersections are sharp and almost blind, a speeding mini-truck hit the rear of his car at a crossing. The impact was so strong that his car spun around twice before it crashed into a canal.

The young man suffered bruises and a broken rib. He thanked his stars because he was sure he would have died or been badly maimed if he had not buckled up.

Ever since, he has been advising people to use their seatbelts. He would proudly tell them he would feel half-naked if he did not wear his seatbelt before starting his car. And he makes sure that his passengers are buckled up.

## A way of life

On cell phones, a columnist once wrote they have "become a way of life and such a vital tool in daily communication that you cannot pry people away from their phones." Also, you probably cannot physically prevent them from using their phones while driving.

If you are a regular office holder, you acquire the habit of answering the phone whenever it rings; and when you want to call up someone, you dial his number without thinking. You tend to carry along that habit when you drive because, as the columnist observed, use of that cell phone has become a way of life.

An office-holder friend of mine was driving one early evening when he decided to call his business partner. While he was dialing the number on his cell phone, he failed to notice a speeding car from the opposite direction, which suddenly overtook the truck in front of it. Soon the car was on my friend's lane. The timely yell of his wife prompted him to swerve to the road shoulder. They survived.

But my friend has been haunted by questions: Suppose the shoulder had been soft and wet? Suppose it had been narrow and it had a barrier or a canal alongside it? Suppose his wife had also been using her cell phone and failed to tell him to duck? Suppose she was not with him?

Motorists with hands-free kits cannot say they are safe because they still need to look away from the road in order to dial numbers to make their call.

The problem is that when you use your phone, you are distracted from your driving which is supposed to be the only thing you must do undisturbed. It is therefore best that you avoid using your phone, whether to receive a call or to make one. If you must use it, stop at a safe place.

We should all follow the law compelling the use of seat belts and prohibiting cell phone use while we drive. We must never think that accidents only happen to others and not to ourselves.

Murphy's Law says that if something can go wrong, it will. Don't let this law catch up with you.

This space was provided by Philippine Daily Inquirer, a Corporate Partner of WWF-Philippines.
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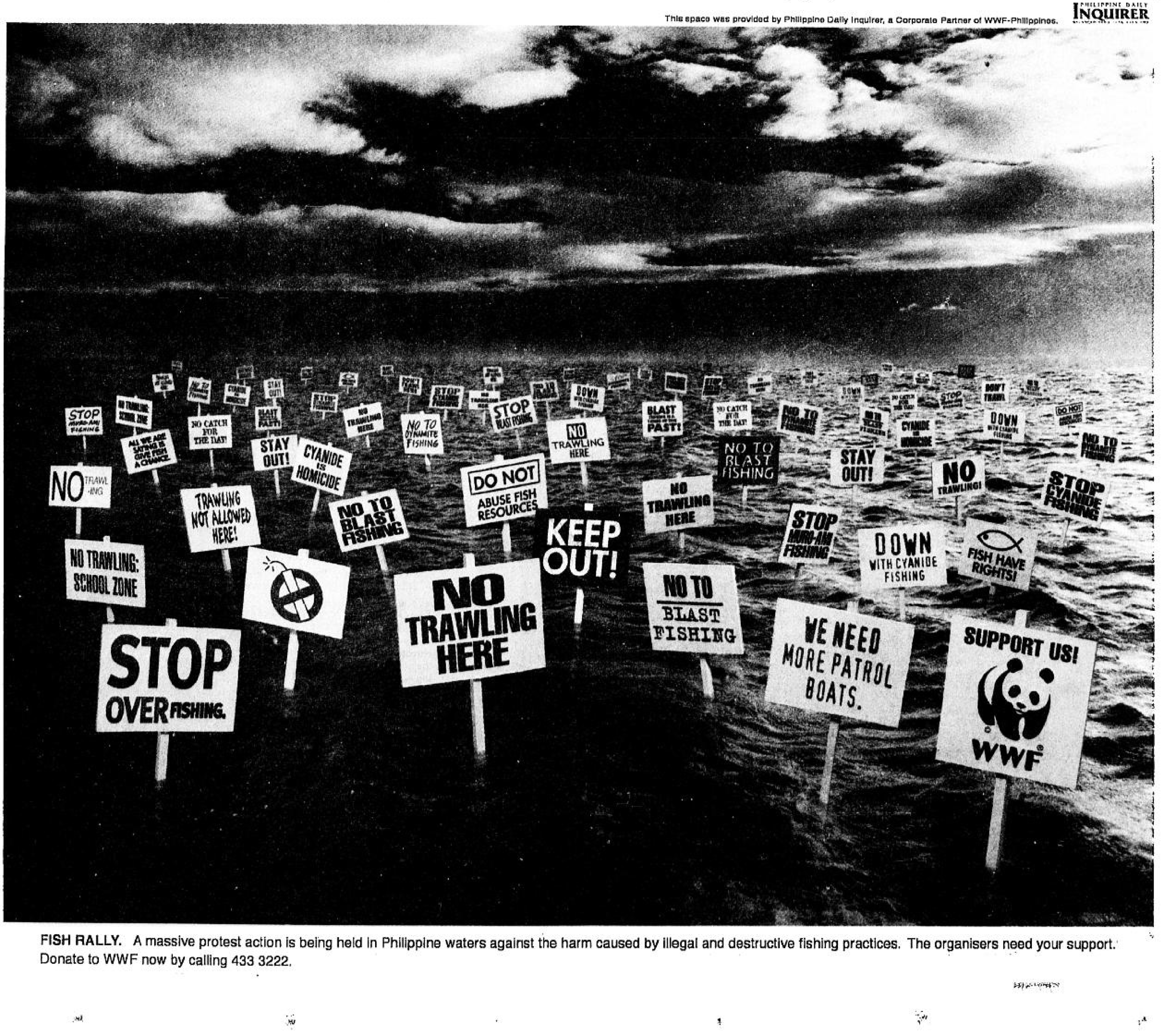

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# Aguiluz raced against time to complete 'Tatarin'

By Alex Y. Vergara

HOW long can a woman bend to the dictates of a domineering husband before she finally finds her own voice and breaks free from his grip?

It takes Lupe and several women of "Tatarin," a film based on Nick Joaquin's short novel "Summer Solstice," almost forever until an ancient ritual stirs their passive souls and changes the way they look at men.

Award-winning director Tikoy Aguiluz breathes life into this period tale that unfolds in two short days, culminating on the feast of St. John the Baptist or night of the summer solstice.

Unlike an earlier stage version that was set during the Spanish times, the film version produced by Viva Films and written by veteran scriptwriter Ricky Lee happens in the 1920s.

"Ricky's first draft digressed from the original," says Aguiluz. "So I told him to be more faithful in adapting it from play to cinema. This film combines theater, dance and literature."

Strangely enough, both director and scriptwriter have crossed paths only now. In fact, "Tatarin" is a first of sorts for Aguiluz in many ways.

"This is the first time I did a film based on Nick Joaquin's work," he says. "He gave us a free hand to come up with our interpretation."

### Vision

Still, Aguiluz hewed the film close to the National Artist's vision of what life was back then and his penchant to juxtapose elements from our Spanish and pagan past.

Although Filipino women were starting to break new grounds during the American period, submissive Lupe (Dina Bonnevie) is still stuck in a time warp when women were better seen than heard.

An assertive Paeng (Edu Manzano) always had the last say until the night of the *tatarin*, a primitive ritual participated in by women, and which literally means to chop off. In this case, probably the shackles that impede women empowerment or their husbands' balls, the source of their oversized egos that perpetuates an endless cycle of oppression.

The spirit of the *tatarin* possesses Amada (Rica Peralejo), the couple's battered maid, who goes into a trance at the foot of a Balete tree and gets caught up in the ritual's incessant chanting and erotic dancing.

Alice Reyes choreographed the dance sequence, while Dez Bautista did the production design.

"The dance ritual acts as a thread that unifies the movie together," says Aguiluz, who, aside from "Summer Solstice," had to refresh himself with other Joaquin works like "Portrait of the Artist as Filipino" and "May Day Eve." He also read a selection of Joaquin's short stories from such anthologies as "Tropical Baroque" and "Tropical Gothic."

### First foray

It also marks his first foray in the Metro Manila Film Festival, the annual awards derby made more crowded and decidedly exciting this year with the likes of Marilou Diaz-Abaya ("Bagong Buwan"), Joel Lamangan ("Hubog") and Chito Roño ("Yamashita") fielding their respective entries.

Aguiluz has already done a number of films for Viva, but unlike some of his low-budget sizzlers, "Tatarin" reportedly costs P25 million to produce. It took Aguiluz 22 shooting days to do the film, but production stretched to a period of three months because of delays.

Ryan Cayabyab has been originally tapped to do the music, says Aguiluz. But Cayabyab went to Greece to receive an award, so Viva eventually offered the musical scoring job to Willy Cruz.

A piece composed by National Artist Lucrecia Kasilag was unable to make it to the score. But Pinikpikan did the ethnic music.

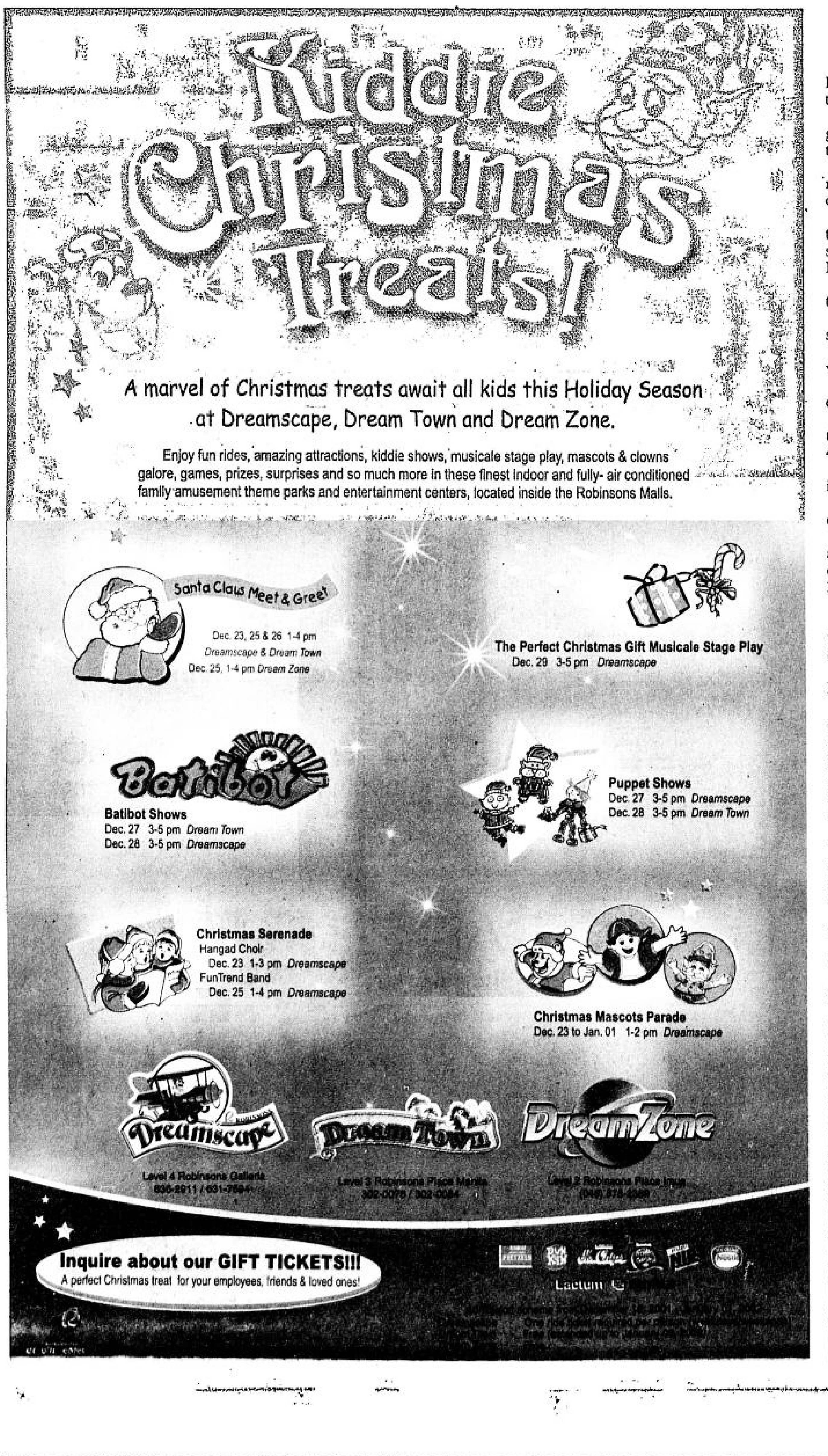
"I had to race against time," says the Aguiluz, also festival director of the recently concluded CineManila. "Because of the ample budget, we were able to overcome such delays."

Aside from being inspired by one of Joaquin's celebrated works, Viva hopes that "Tatarin" generates enough interest among moviegoers since it's also Bonnevie's comeback film.

It would be interesting to see how such a strong and outspoken person in real life essays a quiet, submissive woman on screen.

**IT'S THE** first time for director Tikoy Aguiluz (above) to work on a Nick Joaquin epic and have a filmfest entry.

**THE MEN** and women of "Tatatin: (from left) Edu Manzano, Carlos Morales, Dina Bonnevie, Rica Peralejo and Patricia Javier.



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# Show biz stars' family ties

VIEWFINDER

*Nestor U. Torre*

BET you didn't k now that:

**Edward Norton**'s grandfather invented the shopping mall.

**Sandra Bullock**'s mother is a German opera singer.

**Bill Paxton**'s father took him to Dallas to see President John F. Kennedy the day that Kennedy was assassinated.

**Keanu Reeves**' father is serving a prison sentence for possession of cocaine.

**Cuba Gooding Jr.**'s father was the lead singer of the '70s group, the Main Ingredient.

**Dustin Hoffman**'s father was a prop supervisor at Columbia Pictures.

**Uma Thurman**'s father was the first Westerner to be ordained a Tibetan Buddhist monk.

**Anne Heche**'s father, who was a choir director and closet homosexual, died of AIDS at age 45 in 1983.

**Denis Leary** and **Conan O'Brien** are cousins.

**Glenn Close**'s father was a surgeon who operated at a medical clinic in Zaire for 16 years.

**Pierce Brosnan**'s father abandoned his wife and son when Pierce was only one year old, and didn't contact him until Pierce was well into his 30s.

**Cher**'s mother was married 10 times.

**Kristin Scott Thomas**' father and stepfather were both pilots who died in similar flying accidents.

**Daniel Day-Lewis** is the son of the deceased Poet Laureate of England, **Cecil Day-Lewis**.

### 'Life with Judy Garland'

THE Hallmark Channel's "Hollywood Legends" presents "Life with Judy Garland: Me and My Shadow," on Sunday, Jan. 6 (Part 1) and Monday, Jan. 7 (Part 2). Garland's stormy life has been turned into a dramatic and powerful miniseries that has won five Emmy awards.

The mini-series is an adaptation of the book "Me and My Shadow," written by Garland's daughter, **Lorna Luft**. Starring **Judy Davis** in the title role, the drama also topbills **Tammy Blanchard, Hugh Laurie** and **Victor Garber**.

Judy rose to the top in the movies and as a singer, but stress at work as well as many personal problems took their toll. Overwork, medication and financial difficulties all caught up with the star in 1959. After an attempt to come back to tinseltown, she failed miserably.

On June 22, 1969, she woke up in the middle of the night and took some pills, like she had done many times before. This time, however, she didn't wake up.

### 'Romeo and Juliet'

THE greatest love story ever told, Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," will be staged in English by Bulwagang Gantimpala next month. Schedule:

At the AFP Theater, Camp Aguinaldo: Jan. 11-13 and 18-20, with shows at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

JCS Auditorium (Paco Catholic School): Jan. 26-27 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

RFC Theater/Cinema, Alabang: Feb. 1-3 at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

AFP Theater: Feb. 8 at 8 p.m., an early Valentine treat. Call 899-5745.

### 'Attagirl'

ON Channel 2's "Attagirl" sitcom this Thursday. Dec. 27 at 9 p.m. Gerry (**Michelle Bayle**) nervously realized at her period is two weeks late. Assuming the worst, she tries to figure out who among her sexual partners could possibly have made her pregnant.

For her part, Joey (**Andrea del Rosario**) has decided to give up on her impossible infatuation with her gay coworker Wally (**RJ Rosales**) in order to focus on her new flame, Butch (**Onemig Bondoc**).

### Most popular films

THE top 10 films in the States this week: "Vanilla Sky" with **Tom Cruise** and **Penelope Cruz** leads the list, followed by the all-star-cast "Ocean's Eleven," "Not Another Teen Movie." "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" and "Behind Enemy Lines."

From slots 6 to 10: "Monsters, Inc.," "Spy Games" with **Robert Redford** and **Brad Pitt**, "Black Knight," "Shallow Hal," and the French film, "Amelie."

**CHRISTMAS AT SUBURBIA**

Toy Symphony performs tonight at Suburbia in Malate, as the popular nightspot continues to bring Christmas cheer featuring top bans in limited performances. Fat Session sings retro tunes on Tuesday, Soulid takes centerstage on Thursday and Freeverse performs on Friday. Avail of the 50 percent discount on the minimum consumable charge every Saturday Pido with Take One plays most requested tunes on Dec. 29. For inquiries, call 450-1685 or 86.

# My dad will disown me if I do sexy roles, says ex-siren's niece

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

*Leah Salterio*

EVEN when she's the niece of former screen siren **Alma Moreno** who portrayed some of the boldest sexy roles in her time, **LJ Moreno** is not about the join the bold bandwagon and show skin in her movies.

"My dad will disown me," LJ says. "Even my Tita (Alma) doesn't like me to do sexy roles. I can't even do bed scenes."

Despite the current trend of young actresses immersing themselves in the bold genre, LJ still gets film projects, which do not require her to bare her body or even just show some skin.

LJ's edge is that she is at ease both in comedy and in drama. On TV, she shows off her comic flair in the GMA 7 sitcom "Kool Ka Lang." She also displays her acting mettle as the *contravida* who makes life miserable for Angelica de la Cruz in the telenovela "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin," also on GMA 7.

Last September, LJ was supposed to go back to the United States and join her mom **Debra**, who is the older sister of Alma, as well as continue her college studies in the US. But she couldn't pass up the offer of GMA to be a mainstay of a telenovela. She gave up her plan to go to the US and she instead signed a one-year contract with GMA.

"I like my role as *contravida* because it's very challenging," LJ says. "It helps that I'm working with seasoned performers. Tita **Chanda (Romero)** helps me a lot."

LJ entered show biz six years ago as a member of ABS-CBN's teen show, "G-mik." She has also made notable films like "Nasaan Ka ng Kailangan Kita," "Pedro Penduko" and "Pusod ng Dagat."

Her latest project is the Metro Manila Film Festival entry of E-Corp Films, "Hindi Kita Ma-Reach," where she plays leading lady to presidential son **Mikey Macapagal Arroyo**.

She says it was a breeze working with Mikey. "Initially, I thought he was *mayabang*, being the president's son," she says. "But he's very down to earth, nice and cool. He's like any ordinary guy, with no airs at all."

"Hindi Kita Ma-Reach" is directed by **Willy Milan** and also stars **Elizabeth Oropesa, Tonton Gutierrez, Raymond Bagatsing, Eula Valdez, Manjo del Mundo, Ana Capri, Yam Ledesma** and **Ervin Mateo**.

At 21, LJ (short for Lara Jean) has finally tasted independence. Two months ago, she moved out of her family's residence and is now staying with only a maid in a condo unit in Ortigas Center.

LJ is definitely not loveless at the moment. After ending her controversial relationship with actor **Diether Ocampo**, she now maintains a long distance love affair with **Shawn Jones**, who is not from show biz and whom she met in Manila three months ago.

Shawn, a native of Springfield, Massachusetts, is a friend of former Tanduay PBA import **Kevin Freeman**. He holds basketball clinics for teeners.

Sadly, though, there's not a chance for them to be together during the holidays, but LJ is not breaking her heart over it. "We talk almost every day on the phone and also by e-mail," she grants.

"It's a little hard to maintain a long-distance relationship, but I'm learning how to handle it and keep it going."

### Father Bobby

**BOBBY Andrews** has been visible again this year after a long hiatus following his settling down.

The breakup of his love team with **Angelu de Leon**, after she got pregnant, also made Bobby leave the business. But it turned out that was only temporary.

Bobby has been married for three years now. He and his wife **Bienne** have two sons — **Miguel Arthur**, 2; and **Gabriel**, eight months old.

"I'm very happy now that I have a family," Bobby allows. "It's different when your family is complete with kids."

Bobby disputes the talk that Bienne was the cause of the breakup of the Bobby-Angelu love team, which headlined a number of box-office romance-dramas. He says he definitely decided to choose a woman who is not from show biz to be his wife.

"It's difficult to work with someone you have a personal relationship with," Bobby says. "I met Bienne when I was already in show biz. She understands what I do. She doesn't keep me from doing film or TV projects. She knows this is my bread and butter. Besides, *tama na 'yung isa lang sa amin ang magulo ang buhay.*"

ANDREWS. Plays a priest in his latest movie.

Admirably, Bobby has been able to put some distance between his private life and his profession.

"When I got married, no one knew about my plans," he says. "I guess it works when you don't reveal too much about your personal life while at the same time you don't keep too much from them."

Although he and Angelu are working together again in GMA's newest telenovela, "Sana ay Ikaw na Nga," Bobby is careful not to be part of a love team again.

"I went back to square one when Angelu left show biz," he explains. "It was hard. In the telenovela, Angelu and I are not the lead stars. We play support. There's not much pressure in that."

He completed six movies this year. His first movie outside his home studio, Viva Films, is the filmfest entry, "Hesusmaryosep (4 Fathers)," for Maverick Films.

Bobby cried "unfair" that a real priest found the new movie blasphemous. Running priest **Robert Reyes**, who is said to have been the model for one of the four lead characters in the film, led a rally in front of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) building in Greenhills to protest the showing of "4 Fathers" in this year's filmfest.

"He (Reyes) should watch it first before he gives an opinion," Bobby says. "It's unfair to be making any comments about the movie when you haven't seen it.

"The movie is about priesthood, but it doesn't make fun of priests. There is a moral to the story. Fr. Reyes might even be able to relate to the story, if he watches it."

Bobby stars with **Bojo Molina, Polo Ravales** and **Gerald Madrid** in "4 Fathers," directed by **Edgardo "Boy" Vinarao.**

"We all played our roles lightly," Bobby says. "The audience will see four different lives. We don't even have scenes together."

Bobby admits he initially had reservations about playing a priest when the project was offered to him.

"I was undecided until I read the script," he says. "There are so many characters to play in films, but priests are very interesting because they live by the book. They have a very rigid and structured life."

His character, for instance, finds out years after he joined the priesthood that he has a seven-year-old kid with a former girlfriend.

Gerald's character discovers his true sexuality after becoming a priest.

"These things, or even worse, happen in real life," Bobby maintains. "The movie shows how humans deal with situations, like how my character comes to terms with himself after he discovers he has a family. Do I hide it under the rag or do I leave the priesthood? My character never goes against his vows as a priest."

MORENO. At ease in both comedy and drama.

# Primeline artists wind up busy December with shows

THIS December, Primeline artists Karylle, Tootsie Guevara, Gino Padilla, Lana Asanin, **Nancy Castiglione,** Radha, Aliya Pares, Jed Maddela and the Dye Vest Band and morning radio's number one tandem Chico and Delamar wind up 2001 with their busiest month yet.

Karylle, who is slowly but surely making for herself, continues her stint on GMA 7's Sunday noontime show, "Sop."

On Dec. 30, catch the budding diva in her own portion on the show called "K Channel."

Karylle is also stepping up the promotions for her "Time to Shine" album under Universal Records. She recently released her new single, "Bakit Ba Ikaw," composed by Ito Rapadas of the Neocolours.

Primeline's other young diva Tootsie Guevara just returned from a successful show at the Hong Kong Peninsula early this month. Tootsie is now ready to promote the second single from her album entitled "Sa Puso Ko."

Eighties singing idol Gino Padilla joins the Primeline fold as he makes his much-awaited return to the entertainment scene. He is now preparing for live performances. He was with fellow Primeline artist Tootsie Guevara in Hong Kong.

Another Primeline talent busy with TV questings and sitcoms is commercial and print model-turned-actress Lana Asanin. Lana is seen Thursdays on the dance portion "Oh, la, la!" on "Eat Bulaga," and on the award-winning comedy show, "Idol Ko Si Kap" with Bong Revilla Jr.

Also busy with TV work is singer-actress Nancy Castiglione. On Thursdays, she is featured in the opening number of the top-rating daily noontime show, "Magandang Tanghali, Bayan" on ABS-CBN. One of the rare artists who has successfully crossed over into both networks (and different genres), Nancy is one of the mainstays of the newest soap opera to hit local TV screens, "Sana ay Ikaw Na Nga," which stars Dingdong Dantes, Tanya Garcia, Angelu de Leon and Bobby Andrews on GMA 7.

Nancy also recently signed up with Viva Records as one of its newest artists. Watch out for her forthcoming album.

Meanwhile, making waves in the live entertainment circuit are Radha, Aliya Pares and Jed Maddela with the Dye Vest Band. They are regular favorites at venues like Strumm's Makati, Padi's Point and Ratsky's Malate.

Primeline is proud to count among its roster of artists Chico and Delamar, who are still the hottest team on morning radio with their program, "Rush Hour" on dwKC-FM 93.9 (6-9 a.m. Mondays to Fridays and 6-10 a.m. on Saturdays).

The artists are managed by the husband and wife team of Ronnie and Ida Henares of Primeline, Inc.

For bookings and schedules, call 897-6170 or 897-6172.

KARYLLE. Making a name for herself in show biz.

ASANIN

# The singer . . .

(From page A24)

Miguel Salvador), "My Valentine," "And You Will Call Her Mother" and the wedding song, "Sa Harap ng Panginoon."

Jamie also revives Kathy Trocolli's inspirational ballad, "My Life Is in Your Hands."

This holiday season, Jamie donates part of the sales of the album to the New York Life Seasons Fund, a product of a partnership between Star Records and New York Life Philippines, which aims to provide assistance to children of the Holy Family Home Foundation. The foundation is dedicated to uplift the lives of streetchildren by providing them shelter, guidance and counseling, health, education and other services.

Next year, Jamie will also hold a concert and donate the proceeds of the show to the Sagip-Dugtong shelter for terminally ill children.

In the early '90s, Jamie soared in the music firmament with such memorable hits as "Hey It's Me" and "I've Fallen for You." Today, however, she sings a different kind of tune which moves and inspires people.

"This is path I want to pursue," Jamie says. "Before, I felt good to hear my songs being played on the radio and become hits. But today, it's more fulfilling when you inspire people with the songs that you sing."

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| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN | In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | YAMASHITA | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH | In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

**GLORIETTA 4**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | SUSMARYOSEPI 4 FATHERS | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | YAMASHITA | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA (THX) | In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | TATARIN (Art Film) | In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 5 | HUBOG | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 6 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH | In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 7 | BAGONG BUWAN | In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

**GREENBELT**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA | In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | YAMASHITA | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | REGINE AT THE MOVIES DEC. 28, 29, 30 (Onstage) | |

**ALABANG TOWN CENTER**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | SUSMARYOSEPI 4 FATHERS (THX) | In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN | In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | TATARIN | In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH | In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 5 | HUBOG | In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

# MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

# MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

**Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA**
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DDS) | HUBOG |
| 2 (SDDS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 4 GOLD (DTS) | YAMASHITA |
| 5 GOLD (DOLBY) | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 6 GOLD (SDDS) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 7 GOLD (DOLBY) | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 8 | YAMASHITA |
| 9 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 10 | HUBOG |

**Pearl Plaza Cinemas**
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 (DTS) | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | SUSMARYOSEP |
| 6 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |

Golden Pearl THX

**Masagana CINEMA**
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**starmall Movies**
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | TATARIN |

**METROPOLIS star**
543.3927 loc. 150

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | TATARIN |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 7 | RESERVE |
| 8 | RESERVE |

**PREMIERE CINEMA** THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2011 to13

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |

**Center Plaza Cinema**
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

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|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | MONSTERS |

**FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.**
tel 930.9515

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|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Spring**
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| A | HUBOG |

**Sunshine**
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

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|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |

**GOTESCO CINEMA**

**City**
(Manila) tel 734.8588

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 5 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 6 | |
| 7 (DTS) | |
| 8 (SDDS) | HUBOG |
| 9 (DOLBY) | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Caloocan**
tel 362.3508

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|---|---|
| 2 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |

**Grand Central**
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 (SDDS) | HUBOG |
| 5 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 6 (DOLBY) | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 7 (DTS) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 8 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 9 | TATARIN |

**Commonwealth**
tel 951.0083

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|---|---|
| 1 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | TATARIN |
| 5 (SDDS) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 7 (DOLBY) | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 8 | HUBOG |

**Ortigas**
tel 656.6795

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 3 (DTS) | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 (SDDS) | HUBOG |

**Universal**
(Manila) tel 733.2470

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |

**Sampaquita**
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Dilson**
(Manila) tel 734.7724

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| Dilson | TATARIN |
| Lords | TATARIN |
| Jennet | HUBOG |

**MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong**
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

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|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |

**Prima**
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | TATARIN |

**Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto**
**SUPER CINERAMA**
tel 733.4238

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | HUBOG |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 5 | TATARIN |

**New Divisoria Mall**
**DIVISORIA CINEMA**
tel 244.4619

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | CLOSED |
| 5 | CLOSED |
| 6 | HUBOG |

**Baclaran LRT**
**LRT CINEMA**
tel 512.0115

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|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |

**Berma**
tel 879.2029

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|---|---|
| 1 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**CitiMall**
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |

**CINEMA 2000**

**Cinema 2000 Target Mall**
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DTS) | YAMASHITA |

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | TATARIN |

**Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall**
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 3 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Cinema 2000 Cinemagix**
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | SOON TO OPEN |
| 4 | SOON TO OPEN |

**Cinema 2000 MovieTown**
(Tarlac)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 (DOLBY) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 (DTS) | YAMASHITA |

**Lianas Cinema**
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (SDDS) | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 (DTS) | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Lianas MovieCity**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Olivarez Tri-Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | TATARIN |

**Olivarez Los Baños**
tel (049) 249-2558

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |

**Olivarez Tagaytay**
tel (046) 413.0311

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Morales Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |

**Cabuyao**
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 (DTS) | TATARIN |

**Emperor**
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 3 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |

**Fiesta World Mall**
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

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|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 | TATARIN |

**Jade Cinema**
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

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|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY EX) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 (DTS EX) | TATARIN |

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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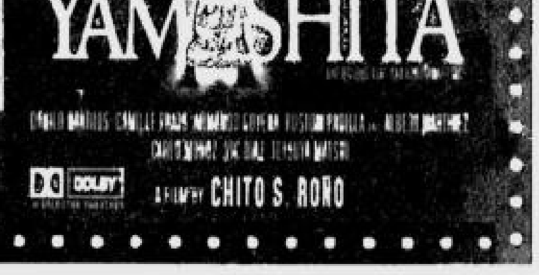

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| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 7 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 8 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 9 | HUBOG |
| 10 | DI KA MAREACH |

**ERMITA** 536-7809 TO 12

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 7 | HUBOG |

**METRO EAST** 632-9115-16 / 633-7641

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 7 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 8 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**NOVALICHES** 936-3229 to 31

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|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 5 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 6 | SUSMARYOSEP ( 4 FATHERS) |
| 7 | YAMASHITA |
| 8 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**IMUS** (046) 471-0100

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|---|---|
| 1 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 2 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | YAMASHITA |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**BACOLOD** (034) 441-0453 / 0458

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|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 | ROCKSTAR |
| 5 | PAGDATING NG PANAHON |
| 6 | MUSKETEER |

**ILOILO** (033) 330-8077 / 8078

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | HUBOG |
| 4 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | ROCKSTAR |

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# THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

**ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101**

| | |
|---|---|
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1 | PAGDATING NG PANAHON |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2 | SUTLA (RE-ISSUE) |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS) | MUSKETEER |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS) | HARRY POTTER |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS) | EARTHQUAKE |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY) | MVP |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY) | SUMMER CATCH |
| FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY) | MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT |
| FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY) | PISNGI |
| FIESTA CARNIVAL | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| NEW FRONTIER | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| **MANILA** | |
| EASTERN | |
| MAXIM | CLOSED |
| MIRAMAR | MARITAL RAPE / EROTIC DIARIES |
| ODEON | EARTHQUAKE |
| ODEON-2 | MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT |
| ROBEN | PISNGI |
| TANDEM-1 | SEX MEDUSA |
| TANDEM-2 | SEX EDUCATION |
| TIMES | PUKYUTAN / STORY OF US |
| **QUEZON CITY** | |
| ACT-1 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| ACT-2 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| ACT-3 | CLOSED |
| ACT-4 | CLOSED |
| CORONET-2 | ORIGINAL SIN |
| QUEZON-1 | PUKYUTAN |
| REMAR | PISNGI |
| REMAR-2 | MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT |
| **NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA** | |
| A | NAIIBANG HAYOP |
| B | ALIPIN NG TUKSO |
| C | |
| **MANDALUYONG CITY** | |
| SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL | 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70 |
| CINEMA-1 | HARRY POTTER |
| CINEMA-2 | THE MUSKETEER |
| **CAINTA RIZAL** | |
| STA. LUCIA EAST | (681-5401 TO 19) |
| CINEMA-1 | ROCKSTAR |
| CINEMA-2 | MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT |
| CINEMA-3 | HUWAG KANG KIKIBO |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | THE SCORE |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS) | MONSTER, INC. |
| CINEMA-6 | OTHER SIDE OF THE LAW |
| CINEMA-7 | SUTLA (RI) |
| CINEMA-8 | PISNGI |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | HARRY POTTER |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | SUMMER CATCH |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | EARTHQUAKE |
| CINEMA-12 | MOST VALUABLE PRIMATE |
| CINEMA-14 | MUSKETEER |
| CINEMA-15 | PAGDATING NG PANAHON |
| **LORES** | |
| CINEMA-2 | CLOSED |
| CINEMA-3 | CLOSED |
| **POWER PLANT CINEMA** | |
| CINEMA-1 | HUBOG |
| CINEMA-2 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| CINEMA-3 | TATARIN |
| CINEMA-4 | YAMASHITA |
| CINEMA-5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| CINEMA-6 | FOUR FATHERS |
| **UNIWIDE METROMALL** | |
| (LAS PIÑAS) | |
| CINEMA-1 | |
| CINEMA-2 | |
| CINEMA-4 | |
| **UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL** | |
| (PARAÑAQUE) | |
| CINEMA-1 | ALIPIN NG TUKSO |
| CINEMA-2 | THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE |
| CINEMA-4 | ALAMID |

# Grand fireworks display

HOLIDAY shoppers at Alabang Town Center can catch the grand fireworks display at the Town Plaza, Dec. 29 and 30, starting 7 p.m.

The fireworks display is part of Alabang Town Center's series of festive events to celebrate the holidays.

Highlight of the festivity is a special concert by Aiza Seguerra and Pido Lalimarmo, Dec. 28.

# SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

**SM CITY BACOOR**
4173888

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | HUBOG |
| 6 | TATARIN |
| 7 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 8 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**SM CENTERPOINT**
7149522 -7161416

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|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 7 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 8 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 9 | HUBOG |
| 10 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**SM CITY FAIRVIEW**
9350749

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|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 5 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 | HUBOG |
| 8 | YAMASHITA |
| 9 | TATARIN |
| 10 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 11 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 12 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |

**SM CITY MANILA**
5239240

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|---|---|
| 1 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 | SUSMARYOEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 6 | HUBOG |
| 7 | TATARIN |
| 8 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 9 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 10 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 11 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 12 | HUBOG |

**SM MEGAMALL**
6331901 • 6329401

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 6 | YAMASHITA |
| 7 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 8 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 9 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 10 | YAMASHITA |
| 11 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 12 | HUBOG |

**SM TUTUBAN**
2514302

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |

DIGITAL dts SOUND · DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

**SM CITY NORTH EDSA**
9295452

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAHY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 7 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 8 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 9 | TATARIN |
| 10 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 11 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 12 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**SM SOUTHMALL**
8066086 • 8066782

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|---|---|
| 1 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | HUBOG |
| 4 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 5 | YAMASHITA |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 8 | TATARIN |
| 9 | YAMASHITA |
| 10 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |

**SM GUADALUPE COMM'L**
8820905

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|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 3 | DI KITA MA-REACH |

**SM CEBU**
2313876

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|---|---|
| 1 | HARRY POTTER |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | YAMASHITA |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 | MUSKETEER |

**SM ILOILO**
3209422

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | CLOSED |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | YAMASHITA |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 | CLOSED |
| 8 | ROCKSTAR |

**SM PAMPANGA**
7128015

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|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 5 | HARRY POTTER |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**SM SUCAT**
8294975

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |

**SM DAVAO**

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|---|---|
| 1 | MUSKETEER |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | TATARIN |
| 5 | HUBOG |
| 6 | BAHY NI LOLA |

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

## CINEMANILA 2001

# New meanings from old tales

BY GINO DORMIENDO
*Contributor*

*(First of two parts)*

THIS year's CineManila international film festival was so unlike the previous years.
There were as many new films as there were filmmakers from the world over, and many of the films were truly world-class, or in a class all their own, motley works by maverick, independent filmmakers working in a medium that, though heavily Hallywoodized in sound and fury, must extract new meanings from old tales and at the same time provoke our minds and senses.

Indisputably world-class were the Belgian films "Farinelli" and "The King is Dancing," both by Gerald Corbiau, the Czech Jan Hrebejk's "Divided We Fall," and Arturo Ripstein's "Divine" from Mexico. These films made the CineManila filmfest sparkle like authentic gems while the rest were flaunting gaudy costume jewelry.

The Korean "Chunhyang" costume epic is a consummate piece of filmmaking that in director Im Kwon's meticulous eye and inspired sensibility has done the entire Asian cinema proud. And there was Danis Tanovic's "No Man's Land," a powerful satirical jab at the Bosnian war that used a simple metaphorical device - the trench -- in its heart-wrenching portrayal of war.

The 14 films in competition, predominantly from the vast Asian region, including two from the host country (Lav Diaz' "Batang West Side" and Gil Portes' "Gatas," comically retitled "In the Bosom of the Enemy"), were a mixed bag of remarkable, earnest, indeed well-meaning works that convey their makers' visions and images of the human condition. No matter the time and place, these films and their filmmakers have raised our hopes for cinema to proudly rise in this part of the world apart and away from Hollywood at a time of widespread globalization.

### Winners

The Japanese entry, "Firefly Dreams," which won the jury's Lino Brocka Grand Prize, broadens the scope of generational schism in modern-day Japan with its philosophical treatise on the roots of dysfunctional relationships between the young and the old, tradition and modernity. John Williams, an American director living in Japan, relies mainly on an old premise to refurbish an episodic tale of a Nagoyan girl who strays into the countryside one summer day and discovers not only herself, her kin and hearth, but also the healing power of bonding with the old generation.

It is, to be sure, not a new terrain that the film explores, and some filmic devices are contrived (such as the old film footage from the old woman's movie) but it is substantially worthier than the other entries in both form and substance, perhaps the kind of film Brocka himself would have loved making.

The American entry, "Roads and Bridges," the Grand Jury Prize winner, by Abraham Lim who is of Chinese descent and resides in L.A., is concededly a more satisfying film, both for its uncompromising view of racism that still haunts America today, and the yawning gap that divides those that perpetuate this lingering malady and its hapless victims.

Lim, an astute writer-editor-director-actor, knows the milieu inside out and makes his mark commendably despite his numerous chores on and off the camera. His film makes an eloquent pitch for tolerance and understanding without falling into didacticism or dialectics, relying mainly on the integrity of its vision, the multifarious singular talents at work here, and the intermittent spurts of irony and paradoxical astuteness.

### Favorite

My other favorite is the Turkish entry, "Clouds of May" by Nuri Belgi Ceylan, who explores a small town of a people at peace with the world and with themselves. Their quiet existence is ruffled with the arrival of a middle-aged filmmaker, Muzaffer, who is intent on making a film of his birthplace. Things, as expected, go haywire when he enlists members of his own family to appear in his film, for they initially resist his intrusion into their privacy.

Though the film lifts a device from Abbas Kiarostami's" Through the Olive Trees," Ceylan knows enough of his own folk and the milieu to make his vision a fully rounded image of life and art blending splendidly, both time and place so charmingly etched, fiction ultimately transcending, if not superimposing, reality.

"FIREFLY Dreams," which copped the jury's Lino Brocka grand prize, broadens the scope of generational schism in modern-day Japan.

The Korean entry, "The Isle," borrows from Oshima's "In the Realm of the Senses," and has its own shocking visual devices which may leave the audience squirming in sheer horror. Director Kim Ki Duk transports us to an isle resort where men hie off to fish and satisfy their lust. A woman (played by Jung Suh, winner of best actress award) who takes them to the little boathouses encounters an ex-cop who is on the verge of suicide. The two later form a rather unusual bond, but it soon deteriorates when the man prepares to leave, posthaste. I shall not recount the shocking devices the director resorts to in order make his point but it supplant s psychology, obsesssions wallow in the pool of bloody water, truth pushed into the extreme with little if any regard for verisimilitude that makes cinema worthy of patronage.

### Two Filipinos

Two films by Filipino-American directors, both based in the US of A, failed, however, to generate much interest, though they have previously done that elsewhere.

The first, "Disoriented," by Francisco Aliwalas, is mainly a coming-of-age comic drama where age takes the better of it and the coming comes in rather late. Aliwalas, who also appears in the lead role of West Cordova who is studying to be a doctor due to pressures from his overzealous Pinoy mother, is still lost in the maelstrom of finding his true person.

A long-gone, New York-based brother suddenly reappears as a transvestite, but is cautioned to feign his appearance for the poor mother's sake. A Japanese girl, bent on becoming a model by transforming her looks, becomes the apple of Cordova's eye.

After all the hullabaloo about their trials and disappointments, the film ultimately comes to terms with the real issue, but sadly not much can be salvaged in this film.

PINATUBO FILMS PRESENTS "DISORIENTED"
FRANCISCO ALIWALAS WAYLAND QUINTERO POTRI RANKA MANIS
JOJO GONZALEZ KAYO TAKAHASHI SUTTON KEANY MUSIC LM'S B EDITOR KEIKO DEGUCHI
SOUND MARK COCHI DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY TAYLOR MORRISON PRODUCER DOUGLAS BACHMAN
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY FRANCISCO ALIWALAS
COMING-OF-AGE comic-drama "Disoriented," by a Filipino filmmaker.

The other film, "Too Much Sleep" by David Maquiling, is another of those search-for-identity movies that young filmmakers have become enamored with. The rather simple plot, involving a young security guard who loses his service gun to a stranger while on board a bus, lacks urgency and significance.

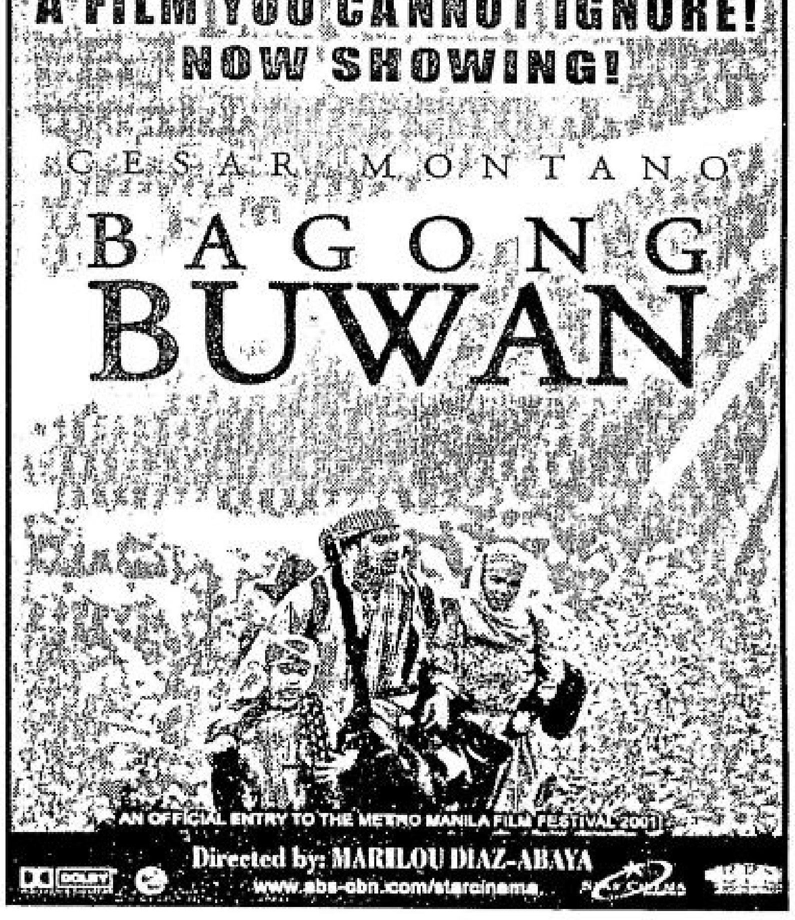
Maquiling's film may have a nice twist or two lurking in the scenario of a man who lacks sleep due to his nocturnal job and must make up for it at daytime, but it is told in a pretty lackadaisical manner and there is not much to keep us engrossed.

*To be concluded*

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| HUBOG - R 18<br>11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50 | DI KITA MA REACH - P 13<br>12:25, 2:45, 5:05, 7:25, 9:45 | TATARIN - R 18<br>11:00, 1:10, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:10 |
| YAMASHITA - GP<br>12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:10 | BAGONG BUWAN - P 13<br>11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 | FOUR FATHERS - R 18<br>12:40, 2:55, 5:10, 7:25, 9:40 |

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.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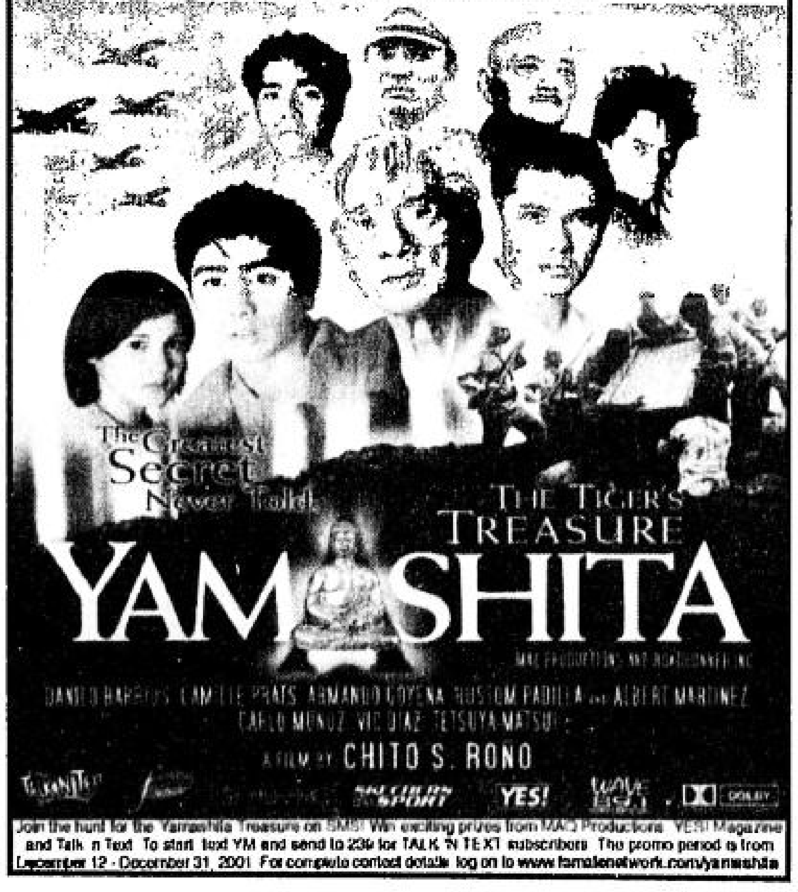
The Greatest Secret Never Told
THE TIGER'S TREASURE
YAMASHITA
DANILO BARRIOS CAMILLE PRATS ARMANDO GOYENA RUSTOM PADILLA ALBERT MARTINEZ
CARLO MUÑOZ VIC DIAZ TETSUYA MATSUI
A FILM BY CHITO S. RONO
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-Conrado de Quiros
Philippine Daily Inquirer

UNCOMPROMISING!
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-Gerard Ramos
Film Reviewer, Today

SEE AND SUPPORT THIS FILM!
This is Joel Lamangan's best! Another international showpiece!"
-Carlitos Siguion-Reyna
Film Director

TOP-CALIBER!
Assunta has depth and fiery emotions; Alessandra, stunning!"
-Mario Bautista
Film Reviewer, Manila Bulletin

A MUST-SEE!
"Powerful Performances!"
-Gil Portes
Film Director

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R18 APPROVED WITHOUT CUTS!!!

jay manalo
wendell ramos
alessandra de rossi
assunta de rossi
DIRECTED BY
JOEL C. LAMANGAN
GOOD HARVEST PRODUCTIONS
FHM

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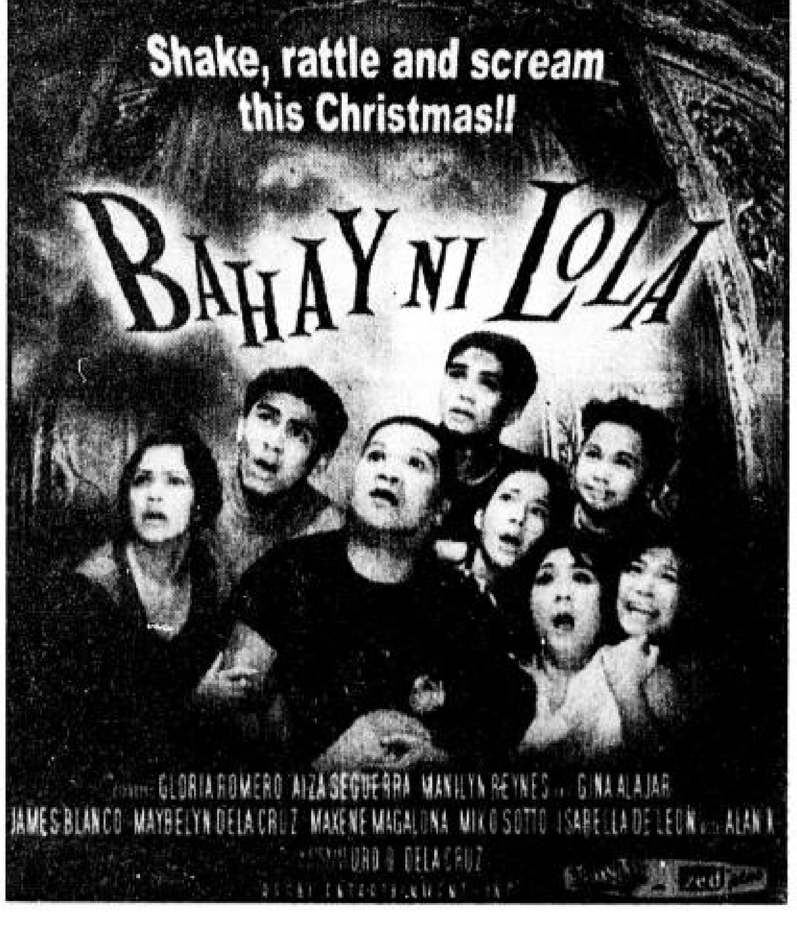
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2001
MTRCB RATING G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED


Shake, rattle and scream this Christmas!!
BAHAY NI LOLA
GLORIA ROMERO AIZA SEGUERRA MANILYN REYNES GINA ALAJAR
JAMES BLANCO MAYBELYN DELA CRUZ MAXENE MAGALONA MIKO SOTTO ISABELLA DE LEON ALAN K
URO Q. DELA CRUZ

# ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

RIVERA. Reluctant diva.

# The singer for all seasons

BY LEAH SALTERIO

JAMIE Rivera is a reluctant diva. Even when she was christened the "inspirational diva," after charting popular inspirational hits, Jamie doesn't really feel comfortable with the tag.

"I'm not title conscious," Jamie maintains. "As long as I can deliver the songs which could touch people's lives, that's fulfilling enough for me."

Last year, Jamie inspired the whole country when she recorded the Jubilee song. Then she sang the theme of Star Cinema's award-winning entry for last December's Metro Manila Film Festival, "Tanging Yaman."

Early this year, Jamie also came out with another stirring prayer song, "Heal Our Land," which became the anthem of the Edsa II people's power revolt.

Jamie now shares her newest album, "Seasons," which contains 12 tracks for every special occasion in the year. This time, however, Jamie does not only record and compose songs for her album. She also produced the musical outing for Star Records.

"I did all the dirty work, from getting the arrangers and back-up singers to booking a studio for recording and thinking of the album design," Jamie relates. "This is my own concept, that's why I wanted everything to be perfect."

Jamie was inspired to come up with an album for all seasons after chatting with members of the Angfourgettable quartet (Dyords Javier, Isay Alvarez, Mon David and Pinky Marquez).

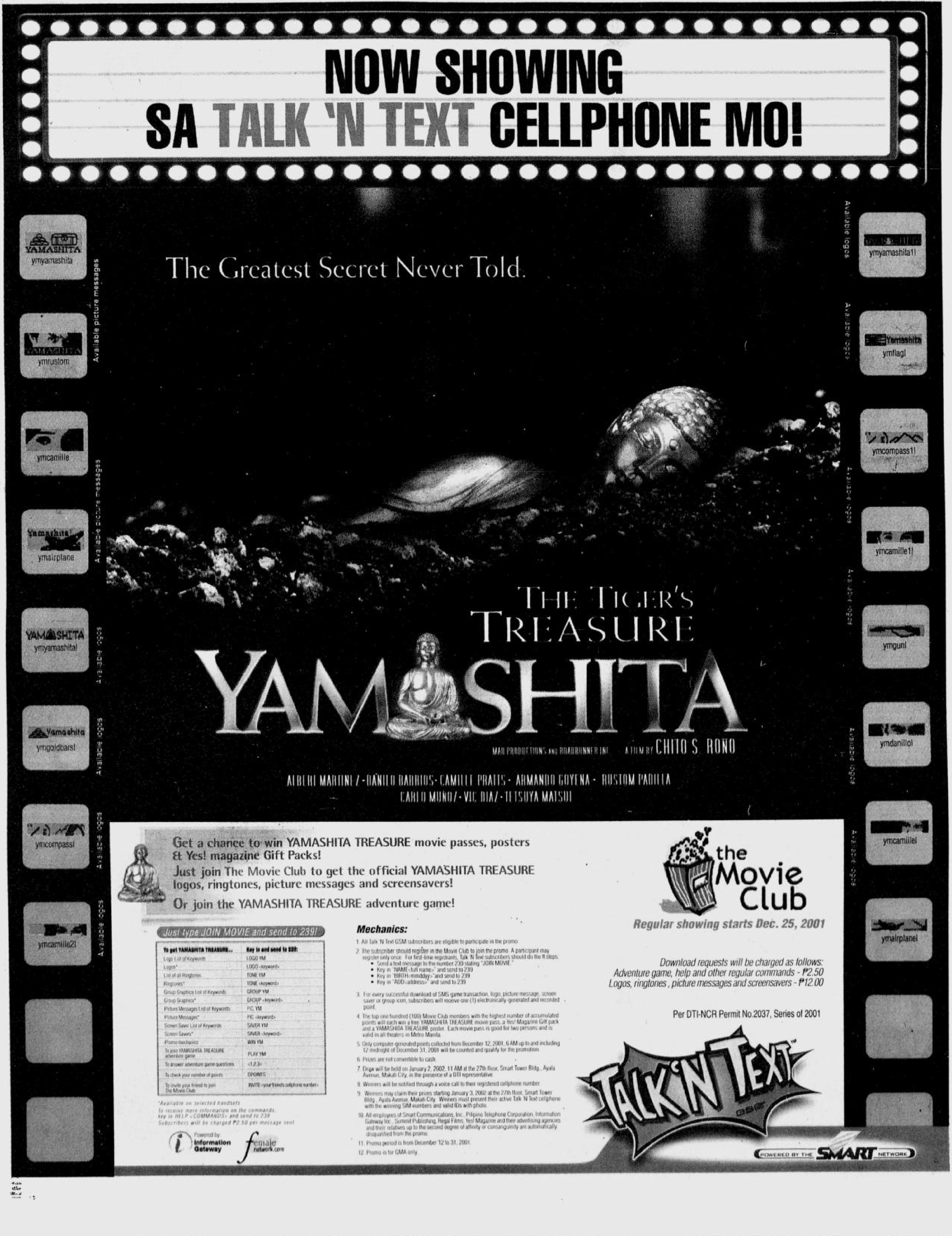
"Dyords was asking what type of songs should we sing for a graduation or a burial," Jamie recalls. "Then I thought, why don't I come up with an album which contains songs for every special occasion?

"There are a lot of artists who make an effort to record a Christmas album. But this one is not just for Christmas. You can play the tunes all year long."

The result is "Seasons," where Jamie sings tunes for Christmas, Valentine, Graduation, Lent, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Wedding, Birthday, Independence Day and even All Soul's Day.

She penned four tunes in the album — the carrier single "Christmas Will Always Be Christmas" (with Rage Band vocalist Juan

THE/ A21



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| Logos* | LOGO <keyword> |
| List of all Ringtones | TONE YM |
| Ringtones* | TONE <keyword> |
| Group Graphics List of Keywords | GROUP YM |
| Group Graphics* | GROUP <keyword> |
| Picture Messages List of Keywords | PIC YM |
| Picture Messages* | PIC <keyword> |
| Screen Saver List of Keywords | SAVER YM |
| Screen Savers* | SAVER <keyword> |
| Promo mechanics | WIN YM |
| To join YAMASHITA TREASURE adventure game | PLAY YM |
| To answer adventure game questions | <1,2,3> |
| To check your number of points | QPOINTS |
| To invite your friend to join The Movie Club | INVITE <your friend's cellphone number> |

*Available on selected handsets
To receive more information on the commands, key in HELP <COMMANDS> and send to 239
Subscribers will be charged P2.50 per message sent

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**Mechanics:**

1. All Talk 'N Text GSM subscribers are eligible to participate in the promo.
2. The subscriber should register in the Movie Club to join the promo. A participant may register only once. For first-time registrants, Talk 'N Text subscribers should do the ff steps:
    - Send a text message to the number 239 stating "JOIN MOVIE."
    - Key in "NAME<full name>" and send to 239
    - Key in "BIRTH<mmddyy>" and send to 239
    - Key in "ADD<address>" and send to 239
3. For every successful download of SMS game transaction, logo, picture message, screen saver or group icon, subscribers will receive one (1) electronically-generated and recorded point.
4. The top one hundred (100) Movie Club members with the highest number of accumulated points will each win a free YAMASHITA TREASURE movie pass, a Yes! Magazine Gift pack and a YAMASHITA TREASURE poster. Each movie pass is good for two persons and is valid in all theaters in Metro Manila.
5. Only computer-generated points collected from December 12, 2001, 6 AM up to and including 12 midnight of December 31, 2001 will be counted and qualify for the promotion.
6. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
7. Draw will be held on January 2, 2002, 11 AM at the 27th floor, Smart Tower Bldg., Ayala Avenue, Makati City, in the presence of a DTI representative.
8. Winners will be notified through a voice call to their registered cellphone number.
9. Winners may claim their prizes starting January 3, 2002 at the 27th floor, Smart Tower Bldg., Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Winners must present their active Talk 'N Text cellphone with the winning SIM numbers and valid IDs with photo.
10. All employees of Smart Communications, Inc., Pilipino Telephone Corporation, Information Gateway Inc., Summit Publishing, Regal Films, Yes! Magazine and their advertising agencies and their relatives up to the second degree of affinity or consanguinity are automatically disqualified from the promo.
11. Promo period is from December 12 to 31, 2001.
12. Promo is for GMA only.

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# BUSINESS

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# Atlas developing new nickel project

By Christine A. Gaylican

ATLAS Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. is developing a multibillion-peso nickel mining project in Palawan.

Atlas said in a report that the Barong nickel mining project in Palawan was a "well-advanced prospect with significant drilling and test pit work having already taken place."

With the Barong nickel mining project, Atlas is considering "various alternatives, including (the) sale of shipping grade (ore) materials to certain Far East markets."

Atlas also plans to develop "a high-pressure acid leach system to process the lower nickel grade but high-cobalt ores at an annual rate of more than 50 million pounds of nickel metal," the company said.

Alakor Corp., a company controlled by the group of businessman Alfredo Ramos, has been aggressively reviving Atlas as it finalizes a prospectus incorporating the Palawan nickel mining and Toledo copper mining projects in line with its planned listing on the capital markets of Australia and the United Kingdom.

Alakor owns 60 percent of Atlas.

"It would be an advantage for Atlas to list on the Australian and London stock exchanges because they are both mining oriented and will provide a greater level of share price support compared with the Philippine Stock Exchange," a source at the Bureau of Mines and Geosciences said.

Atlas has formed a joint venture with Jinshuan Nonferrous Metals Corp. of China to help it rehabilitate and reopen the Toledo copper mine in Cebu.

Atlas said in a report obtained by the INQUIRER that the Toledo copper mine's rehabilitation would require some $84 million, and that it expected to fund the mine's reopening through "a combination of copper concentrate off-take agreements, equity placements and bank loans."

Atlas is currently studying off-take arrangement proposals with companies such as Sumitomo Corp., LG-Nippon, NFC (China Nonferrous) and Enron Metals & Commodities.

The agreement would supersede an accord signed last year between Atlas and the China Nonferrous Metal to reopen the Toledo copper mine, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said.

These investments reflect a revival in the Philippine mining industry, as local and overseas companies set up operations to take advantage of the country's large mineral resources as prices for nickel, copper and other metals in the world market increase.

Nickel for three-month delivery fetches more than $8,000 a metric ton on the London Metal Exchange, or nearly double the price at the same time last year.

# SM group opens ₱600-M casino complex

By Doris C. Dumlao

RETAIL tycoon Henry Sy has begun plans to develop a 20-hectare property south of Metro Manila with a P600-million casino complex that opened for business nearly two weeks ago.

In an interview, SM Investments Corp. chief financial officer Jose Sio said the casino marked the opening salvo of Sy's vast property project in Tagaytay, Cavite.

The 10,000-square-meter casino at Taal Vista opened its doors on Dec. 15.

It was originally scheduled to open in July, but industry sources said pricing issues delayed the conclusion of a deal between SM Investments and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

Pagcor, a state-run firm, is operating the casino.

Sio said SM Investments invested about P600 million in the new casino, including the property where it was built.

Pagcor placed its own money in the gaming facilities used inside the casino.

Sio said the SM group of companies was still in the process of finalizing the amount of investments it would need for the rest of its Tagaytay project—the group's first property development project in the area.

Different companies under the SM group are developing the 20-hectare property.

Sio said the group was not planning to bring in any strategic partners for the project.

"The property is envisioned to be a major tourist destination. We will put up a new hotel adjoining the casino, but we haven't finalized yet how many rooms there will be or whether it will be a four-star or a three-star hotel," Sio said.

He said the project would also include shopping centers—the forte of Sy's flagship company, SM Prime Holdings Inc., which operates the country's biggest shopping mall chain.

The SM group, meanwhile, would continue to renovate the old Taal Vista property without sacrificing Taal Volcano's panoramic view, he said.

"We can't put up a high-rise property there because it will block the view of the volcano," Sio told the INQUIRER.

He said the SM group would instead put up a new hotel in the other SM property across Taal Vista.

He said the Sheraton group was still being considered to manage the new SM hotel in Tagaytay.

The SM group completed a new hotel in Cebu City that Sheraton was supposed to manage, but Sheraton eventually decided to defer operations because of the global economic slump.

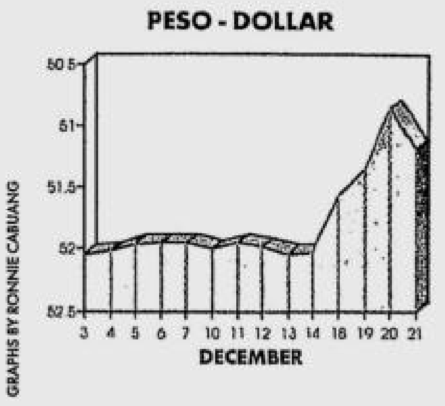
Sio said the group slowed down on its plan to build a hotel on another prime property in Baguio City and instead focused on retail, specifically on an area for food outlets.

"But the vision is to put up a convention hall-hotel in Baguio City," he said.

City officials said Sy also wanted to put up a casino to attract tourists to his project but met stiff opposition from the Church.

## INDICATORS

### CURRENCIES



**Peso-Dollar Rate**

₱ 51.18 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Dec. 21, 2001

¥ 129.38 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Dec. 21, 2001

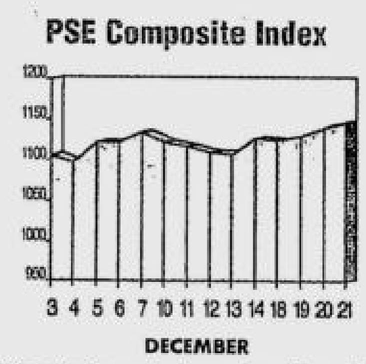
**GOLD:$277.20/277.70**
per ounce Hong Kong,
Dec. 21, 2001

Dec. 21, 2001

| Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Foreign currency in US$ | Foreign currency in Peso |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 1.110001 | 1.000000 | 51.2350 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.008639 | 0.007783 | 0.3988 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.609391 | 1.449900 | 74.2856 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.142491 | 0.128370 | 6.5770 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.681150 | 0.613648 | 31.4403 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.703156 | 0.633473 | 32.4560 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.604477 | 0.544573 | 27.9012 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.560041 | 0.504541 | 25.8502 |
| Bahrain | Dinar | 2.944457 | 2.652661 | 135.9091 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.296001 | 0.266667 | 13.6627 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.604575 | 0.544662 | 27.9058 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000110 | 0.000099 | 0.0051 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.025325 | 0.022815 | 1.1689 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.302288 | 0.272331 | 13.9529 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000860 | 0.000775 | 0.0397 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 0.900900 | 46.1576 |
| Germany | Mark | 0.511292 | 0.460623 | 23.6000 |
| France | Franc | 0.152450 | 0.137341 | 7.0367 |
| Netherlands | Guilder | 0.453781 | 0.408811 | 20.9454 |
| Austria | Schilling | 0.072673 | 0.065471 | 3.3544 |
| Belgium | Franc | 0.024790 | 0.022333 | 1.1442 |
| Italy | Lire | 0.000516 | 0.000465 | 0.0238 |
| Finland | Markka | 0.168188 | 0.151521 | 7.7632 |
| Portugal | Escudo | 0.004988 | 0.004494 | 0.2303 |
| Spain | Peseta | 0.006011 | 0.005415 | 0.2774 |
| Luxemburg | Franc | 0.024790 | 0.022333 | 1.1442 |
| Ireland | Punt | 1.269738 | 1.143907 | 58.6081 |

### STOCK MARKET

## Stocks to rise



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCK prices are expected to gain further as trading resumes today after a long Christmas break.

The seasonal Christmas rally is still expected to provide an upward bias during the last trading week of the year, but volumes are likely to be thin when the market reopens today ahead of another long weekend into the New Year holidays.

Analysts said the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index is likely to end the year on a positive note in anticipation of a better year ahead.

They said they do not expect the market to move strongly in the early part of the New Year either, as investors are likely to await confirmation of improving economic and corporate performances.

## Bank license to remain tight

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has said it will make it tougher for new entrants to operate here even without a moratorium on licensing unless new lenders acquire or merge with existing players.

The moratorium is set to be lifted in June 2003.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the central bank was also not keen on lifting its ban on new branch licensing following its renewed call for mergers and consolidations in the industry.

"We are still over-banked. Once the moratorium on bank licensing is lifted, we cannot readily ease the policy. We have to continue to make new entry restrictive, unless it is through a merger or acquisition," Buenaventura said.

The General Banking Act provides for a three-year moratorium on bank licensing while the central bank continues to observe a ban on new branch licenses.

The moratorium on new bank licenses was imposed by the BSP in 1999 even before the General Banking Act was enacted.

## More flights between RP, Korea

BOTH the Philippines and Korea will now be enjoying three to four additional flights per week following the signing of an amended air rights agreement between the two countries.

According to a confidential memorandum of understanding between the Philippines and South Korea, "the designated airlines of each side shall be entitled to operate up to 16 weekly frequencies with immediate effect and up to 17 weekly frequencies with effect from the Iata (International Air Transport Association) northern summer 2002 season for passenger capacity entitlement with any type of aircraft."

Air Transportation Office chief Adelberto Yap told the INQUIRER in an interview that the additional entitlements was "to our benefit" as the "Koreans are the ones sustaining our tourism."

### INTEREST RATES

Dec. 21, 2001

| PARTICULARS | Today | Previous Day | Week Ago | Month Ago | Year Ago |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bangko Sentral R/P Rates (% p.a.) 1/<br>24 December 2001 | | | | | |
| Overnight R/P | 10.0000 | 10.0000 | 10.5000 | 10.5000 | 15.7500 |
| Term R/P | N.Q. | N.Q. | N.Q. | N.Q. | N.Q. |
| Interbank Call Loan Rate (% p.a.)<br>24 December 2001 | | | | | |
| Weighted Ave. | 8.4063 | 9.2188 | 8.1875 | 8.5000 | 13.5625 |
| High | 9.5000 | 15.0000 | 8.4375 | 8.7500 | 13.6250 |
| Low | 7.8750 | 8.0000 | 8.0000 | 8.3125 | 13.5625 |
| Promissory Note Rates (% p.a.) 2/<br>24 December 2001 | | | | | |
| 60 Days | 14.1250 | 14.1250 | N.T. | 11.6200 | N.T. |
| 90 Days | N.T. | N.T. | N.T. | N.T. | N.T. |
| 180 Days | N.T. | N.T. | N.T. | N.T. | N.T. |
| Foreign Interest Rates (% p.a.) | | | | | |
| 90-day LIBOR | 1.9000 | 1.9000 | 1.8700 | 2.1700 | 6.4600 |
| 90-day SIBOR | 1.9100 | 1.9100 | 1.8700 | 2.1500 | 6.4800 |
| 180-day LIBOR | 1.9800 | 1.9800 | 1.9200 | 2.2500 | 6.2500 |
| 180-day SIBOR | 1.9700 | 1.9900 | 1.9200 | 2.2200 | 6.2700 |

# RP firms gave highest pay increase in 2001

HONG KONG—Filipino workers got the highest pay increases this year, despite the economic and political difficulties facing the Philippines.

This was one of the major findings of the latest Annual Asia-Pacific Salary Increase Survey, conducted by global management consulting and outsourcing firm, Hewitt Associates.

The study showed that companies in the Philippines implemented an average base salary increase ranging from 10.1 percent to 11.4 percent, depending on the job category.

"In fact, the Philippines was the only location in which average base salary increases reached double digits this year," the study said.

Other countries included in the survey managed to give out only small pay increases as the global economy entered a recession during 2001, and the pay rises in Asia-Pacific were generally smaller than those granted a year earlier.

The results were based on Hewitt's survey of 726 foreign, locally owned and joint venture companies representing 784,000 employees across the region between August and October.

A WORKER mans his post in one of the country's high-tech factories. A study has shown that companies in the Philippines have implemented an average base salary increase ranging from 10.1 to 11.4 percent, the highest in the region.

### Comprehensive survey

The survey measured actual and projected salary increases and compensation practices for five job categories: Top/Senior Management, Manager, Professional/ Technical/ Supervisory, Clerical and Support, and Manual Workers.

In addition, since a number of responses were collected prior to the Sept. 11 events in the United States, a follow-up survey was conducted in October to measure the tragedy's impact on the pay policies of 330 respondent companies.

The annual survey, the most comprehensive of its kind in the region, included a detailed study of salary trends in nine countries/ regions: Australia, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. Less exhaustive research was also conducted in Indonesia and Japan.

Following the Philippines was Korea, which awarded the second highest overall average base salary increases, amounting to between 8.5 percent and 9.6 percent, also depending on the job category.

### Lowest in Hong Kong

As in previous years, the smallest percentage increases were reported in the more developed economies of Hong Kong and Singapore, respectively.

In 2001, average salary increases in Hong Kong ranged between 2.9 percent and 4.1 percent, while employees in Singapore fared slightly better, with increases ranging from 5.4 percent to 4.6 percent.

In almost all study locations, 2001 salary increases fell short of the forecasts made by study participants in 2000.

Last year's optimism can be attributed to the recovery buoying the regional economy at the time the study was being conducted.

"The trends in more developed economies are often at variance with those seen in the emerging economies," said Mick Bennett, the Asia-Pacific managing director of Hewitt Associates.

"Ironically, although Hong Kong is in the unenviable position of last place in the pay rise scales, it was nevertheless the only study location in 2001 in which average salary increases were higher than last year's," he added.

### RP top again in 2002

For 2002, companies in the Philippines are projecting the highest percentage salary increases for 2002, between 10.8 percent and 11.7 percent. Participants in Hong Kong are projecting the smallest percentage increases, in the range of 2.3 percent to 1.5 percent.

Further evidence that participants expect unfavorable economic conditions in next year is the almost unanimous forecast of more widespread pay freezes.

Employees in Malaysia and Singapore were hit hardest by pay freezes in 2001, with 11 percent of survey respondents in each country implementing pay freezes this year. Malaysia, nevertheless, was the only country indicating a drop in the level of pay freezes in 2002—down to 6 percent.

The outlook for 2002 is particularly gloomy for employees in Hong Kong and Taiwan, where pay freezes are projected by 30 percent and 20 percent of respondents, respectively.

The attraction and retention of talent continued to be a significant issue for approximately half of respondents of the 2001 Salary Increase Survey depending on the particular location.

"Attraction" issues were faced by between 35 percent and 50 percent of companies. Information technology, sales, engineering, marketing and accounting were the industries in which attraction issues were challenging for most participants. "Retention" was also a major issue for survey participants, with marginally fewer companies saying they faced issues retaining staff. The industries grappling with the greater degree of retention issues were the same as those facing the most critical attraction issues.

### Follow-up survey

In light of the events of Sept. 11 in the United States, and the subsequent decline in the global economy, Hewitt Associates conducted a follow-up study to measure the impact on salary increase policies.

Hewitt surveyed 330 companies in 11 countries, with data drawn from both participants and non-participants of the main survey.

Of the 330 participating companies, 55 percent of companies did not anticipate, or had not implemented any changes to their current year or projected 2002 salary increase budgets in response to the Sept. 11 events and the subsequent economic decline.

The remaining 45 percent of participants were either planning, or had implemented 2002 changes to their salary increase budgets as a direct result of these factors.

Of this latter group—numbering 150 companies—94 companies attributed the changes to a combination of the Sept. 11 events and the economic conditions prevailing globally and locally.

A further 54 companies in this group cited purely economic conditions as the reason for instituting the changes, while the remaining two companies cited the Sept. 11 events as the sole reason for changing salary increase policies.

# Kirin, Cosmos deals to shore up dollar reserves, says BSP

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

A MAN arranges a can of Kirin Ichiban draft beer beside other beers, including San Miguel, at a convenience store in suburban Manila. Kirin Brewery Co., Japan's No. 2 beer maker, said it would acquire about 15 percent of San Miguel Corp., the country's largest food and beverage conglomerate, for about $536 million. The government, which was claiming a 47-percent stake in San Miguel, had said it would review the Kirin deal and decide later whether it would approve it. AP

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is counting on two major investments next year—the $540-million entry of Japanese brewer Kirin Brewery Co. into San Miguel Corp. and $150-million sale of Cosmos Bottling Corp. to a group that includes The Coca Cola Co.—to shore up the country's dollar reserves.

"Next year, we are anticipating the $120-million to $150-million investment from Cosmos and the $540-million Kirin deal, if it is approved. Those two will be a good start for our gross reserves," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in an interview.

The central bank is aiming to keep the country's international reserves at between $14 billion and $15 billion next year. At this range, the Philippines will be able to pay more than four months worth of imports and twice the size of its debts maturing in a year.

Buenaventura said should the Kirin-San Miguel and Cosmos-Coke deal push through, these would not only shore up the country's dollar stash but also lift the domestic economy in the first half of next year, a period when global demand was forecast to be weak.

He said the Kirin-San Miguel deal was a welcome investment if it would not prejudice the position of the government that the coconut levy funds were public.

Kirin, Japan's No. 2 beer maker, has offered to acquire 15 percent of San Miguel, the country's biggest food and beverage conglomerate, for $540 million.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has instructed Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II to review the deal.

The government wants to ensure Kirin's $536-million share purchase in San Miguel will not substantially dilute its shareholdings in San Miguel.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government has said it will not attempt to block the deal.

The Kirin-San Miguel deal was approved by the San Miguel board on Dec. 14. It was clouded later the same day when the Supreme Court ruled that the government had control of a fund that held a 27-percent stake and five board seats in San Miguel. The five seats are currently controlled by allies of San Miguel chair Eduardo Cojuangco.

The PCGG is trying to win back control in separate legal action of a separate 20-percent stake controlled by Cojuangco.

The PCGG earlier expressed concern that Kirin's investment could dilute the government's contested stake in the Philippine brewer.

The Supreme Court ruling on the coconut levy funds, which owns the 27-percent stake in San Miguel, was seen as a setback for Cojuangco's attempt to retain control over the company.

Ms Macapagal said her government had no plans to try to replace the San Miguel management.

The PCGG has pending criminal and civil suits against Cojuangco over the use of the coconut levy funds, which the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos had collected from coconut farmers in the 1970s.

The government alleged the funds were used to acquire a 47-percent stake in San Miguel, including the 20 percent still controlled by Cojuangco, who maintained the stake was acquired with private funds.

The PCGG was created to recover the alleged ill-gotten wealth of Marcos and his cronies following a popular revolt that ended his 20-year rule in 1986. It sequestered the 47-percent share block, but the Supreme Court has since authorized Cojuangco to vote the 20-percent block under his name.

The Macapagal administration has been trying to regain control of the five board seats allotted to the coconut levy funds. Deposed President Joseph Estrada had earlier appointed Cojuangco allies to the seats.

# BOI to seek law amending auto excise taxes

**By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.**

THE BOARD of Investments will ask Congress to amend the prevailing excise tax rates on commercial vehicles to plug loopholes enjoyed by sport-utility vehicles while maintaining the tax exemption covering Asian-utility vehicles.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said the BOI wanted to change the vehicle tax system from excise tax based on engine size to ad valorem based on prices in line with its drive for a more level playing field.

The government currently slaps excise taxes on vehicles based on engine size—15 percent for 1,600-cc gasoline and 1,800-cc diesel engines; 35 percent for 2-liter gas and 2.3-liter diesel engines; 50 percent for 2.7-liter and 3-liter diesel engines; and 100 percent for engines with a displacement above 3 liters.

High-end SUVs are able to escape paying any excise taxes by unfairly riding on the tax exemption granted to 10-passenger vehicles, a special government perk aimed specifically for AUVs.

SUVs, which normally have a seating capacity of six, add jump seats in the rear compartment to accommodate four more passengers and avail of the tax exemption.

Roxas said the BOI would ask Congress for legislation that would specifically designate the tax exemption for AUVs while ensuring that SUVs would pay the right taxes.

This means buyers of AUVs will continue to be exempted from the excise tax regardless of the sticker prices while SUV buyers will have to pay a higher tax for a higher priced unit.

"We want to close the 10-seat window for SUVs but without locking out AUVs, which should continue to enjoy its tax-exempt status," Roxas said.

Roxas said the BOI wanted to keep AUVs affordable because it was an entry-level vehicle for most Filipinos and a prime product for export because of its high local value added at more than 50 percent.

Roxas said the BOI was also looking at other routes that would provide a quicker way to effect these tax changes. He was concerned that if the BOI depended on Congress taking action on their petition, it could take more than a year or probably never to implement these reforms.

The country's AUV assemblers—Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. (Tamaraw Revo), Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. (Adventure) and Isuzu Philippines Corp. (Hi-Lander/Crosswind)—sold a total of 22,891 units in the first 11 months of the year, more than 21,784 units higher than the number of passenger cars sold by all assemblers during the same period.

This is why Honda Cars Philippines inc. is joining the bandwagon and unleashing its AUV bet next year and why Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc., which has wallowed in the lower half of industry sales rankings, is aggressively pushing for a flat tax on all vehicles.

# BPS revises guidelines on cement

THE BUREAU of Product Standards has revised its guidelines for imported cement following reports that some of these are substandard and do not comply with certain government requirements.

Under BPS Memorandum Circular 004, all cement imports will have to undergo a series of "compressive strength" tests when securing a product standard certification mark license and an import commodity clearance from the bureau.

The revised guidelines also require imported cement to pass a "verification test" in the Philippines, on top of foreign tests or testing done in the country where the imported cement originates. To consist of a complete physical and chemical testing, this verification test is needed when applying for an ICC, and its results will prevail over those of the foreign tests.

The BPS issued the new guidelines "based on the reports received by (the BPS) on the proliferation of substandard cement and the findings of laboratory tests on the non-compliance of cement to the requirements of Philippine National Standards, particularly on insoluble residue requirements and labeling requirements."

Under BPS Memorandum Circular 004, ICC applications shall be submitted on a per shipment per bill of lading basis. Moreover, the BPS will issue an ICC only for cement importations that are properly documented.

The circular also requires imported cement to carry the name and address of the manufacturer, as well as the importer, in its packaging. Every bag of imported cement must also be stamped with the ICC logo, and must be indicated or marked with the mandatory red color band.

Finally, all cement samples (whether locally produced or imported) will have to be submitted for testing in any of the three BPS-accredited testing centers only. These are the laboratories of Bonifacio Stanger in Taguig; Philippine GeoAnalytics Inc. and Cement Central Laboratory, both in Quezon City.

# RFM finalizing deal with investor to form new flour milling company

**By Doris C. Dumlao**

FOOD and beverage conglomerate RFM Corp. is finalizing a deal with a strategic investor in a bid to spin off its flour business,

"We will create a new company, a flour milling company, and the new investor will buy into it. The equity sharing will be 50-50 percent," RFM president and chief executive Jose Concepcion III said in an interview.

"We have identified a strategic investor but we can't disclose yet. We are now in the valuation stage," he said.

RFM started out as a flour milling company many years ago before expanding into other businesses like food and beverage, real estate, banking and even semiconductors.

Earlier this year, it sold its stakes in Consumer Savings Bank and PSi Technologies Holdings Inc.

RFM is operating flour milling as just a single division, not as a separate subsidiary. The entry of a new investor will allow the company to spin the business off into a whole new unit.

RFM spokesperson Ramon Lopez said the group was negotiating with both foreign and local investors that were interested in buying into RFM's flour milling business.

The move is part of RFM's strategy to bring in strategic investors to its different businesses, Lopez said.

He said the company was, for instance, also scouting for a potential merger partner for its real estate unit, Philippine Township Inc., to better weather the continued slump in the property sector.

Philtown, which is engaged in middle-income land banking and subdivision development, has assets located within Metro Manila and Southern Luzon.

RFM earlier entered into a deal with New York-based fund manager WP Argosy Ltd. to buy out the latter's entire 21-percent stake in RFM for P1.05 billion using part of the proceeds from the sale of its profitable soft drink unit, Cosmos Bottling Corp.

The financial closing of the P14-billion deal, of which P11.6 billion will go to RFM for its 82.3-percent stake, is expected this week.

With the sale of its cash cow, RFM is also exploring new businesses, including entertainment, specifically television broadcasting.

"Once we're able to collect the cash, the first thing we'll do is continue to do our job of bringing strategic investors to our different groups so that we will have better chances of going through the crisis," Concepcion said.

# Auditing firms buck new SEC circular

**By Elena R. Torrijos**

AUDITING firms are strongly objecting to the provision of a new circular drafted by the Securities and Exchange Commission requiring them to directly submit to the corporate watchdog any material finding of dishonesty or error that will distort a publicly listed client's financial statements.

Under the proposed circular, only external auditors accredited by the SEC based on compliance with certain asset and track record requirements could be engaged by public companies.

The SEC included in the draft circular a requirement that listed companies should include in every contract of engagement a provision that the external auditor shall report to the SEC within 30 days from discovery any cases of fraud, dishonesty or error based on generally accepted accounting standards.

SEC chief accountant Purita Fajilan told reporters that the big five accounting firms sought a meeting on Thursday to express their opposition to the provision.

"They do not want to report to the SEC. They want to report to management or audit committee of the firm and for them to report to the SEC. They say it is not their duty to report on their clients to the SEC," Fajilan said.

The so-called big five auditing firms are Arthur Andersen, KPMG, Deloitte & Touche, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young, all of which have local partners.

Aside from fraud or error, the external auditors would also be required to report the following to the SEC:

- Adjustments or potential losses, the aggregate of which amounts to at least 10 percent of the total assets for companies with over P50 million;
- Any finding to the effect that the company's assets, on a going-concern basis, are no longer adequate to cover the total claims of creditors;
- Transactions involving conflict of interest.

The SEC's compliance and enforcement department shall conduct the necessary investigation or special examination to substantiate the report of the external auditor.

Auditors that fail to comply with the requirements shall be, after due notice and hearing, subject to a basic penalty of P50,000 plus a daily fine of P1,000 until the requirement was met.

The auditor shall also be recommended for delisting from the list of accredited external auditors or suspended for a certain time period.

## Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, December 21, 2001)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES | | | | | |
| BANKS | | | | | |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 58 | 58.5 | 57.5 | 58 | 607,000 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 24.25 | 25.5 | 24.25 | 25 | 1,623,900 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 189 | 189 | 185 | 187 | 16,280 |
| Philippine National Bank | 62 | 67 | 62 | 67 | 107,500 |
| Rizal Comm. Banking Corp. | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 2,000 |
| Security Bank Corp. | 16.25 | 16.5 | 15.75 | 16 | 27,500 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 15.5 | 16.25 | 15.25 | 16 | 209,000 |
| FINANCIAL SERVICE | | | | | |
| Bankard Inc. | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 10,000 |
| First Metro Invest. Corp. | 220 | 240 | 220 | 240 | 110 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 1310 | 1315 | 1310 | 1315 | 890 |
| Sun Life Financial Serv. | 1070 | 1070 | 1050 | 1060 | 21,440 |
| COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL | | | | | |
| COMMUNICATION | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 24.25 | 24.25 | 24 | 24 | 4,200 |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 0.38 | 0.38 | 0.38 | 0.38 | 660,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 600 | 605 | 600 | 605 | 13,300 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 412.5 | 422.5 | 412.5 | 420 | 68,650 |
| Philweb.Com Inc. | 0.018 | 0.018 | 0.018 | 0.018 | 26,400,000 |
| POWER & ENERGY | | | | | |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 23 | 23.25 | 23 | 23 | 77,100 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 31 | 31.5 | 31 | 31.5 | 1,135,100 |
| Petron Corp. | 1.5 | 1.52 | 1.48 | 1.52 | 2,933,000 |
| TRANSPORTATION SERVICES | | | | | |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv | 2 | 2.08 | 2 | 2.08 | 3,933,000 |
| Negros Navigation Co. Inc. | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 100,000 |
| CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS | | | | | |
| Republic Cement Corp. | 0.65 | 0.75 | 0.65 | 0.75 | 950,000 |
| FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO | | | | | |
| Cosmos Bottling Corp. | 5.7 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 28,000 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 | 3,800 |
| La Tondeña Distillers Inc. | 23 | 23.25 | 23 | 23.25 | 14,000 |
| RFM Corp. | 2.24 | 2.4 | 2.22 | 2.4 | 7,815,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 42.5 | 43 | 42 | 42.5 | 1,459,200 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 52.5 | 53 | 52 | 52.5 | 481,400 |
| Vitarich Corp. | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 40,000 |
| HOLDING FIRMS | | | | | |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg A | 0.71 | 0.73 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 290,000 |
| Ayala Corp. | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.65 | 3,756,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 180,000 |
| Ajo.Net Holdings Inc. | 0.7 | 0.76 | 0.7 | 0.76 | 1,060,000 |
| Alcorn Gold Res. Corp. | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 20,000,000 |
| ATN Holdings Inc. | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 10,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 0.62 | 0.64 | 0.61 | 0.64 | 4,500,000 |
| Basic Consolidated Inc. | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 700,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 100,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 400,000 |
| Ebecom Holdings Inc. | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 1,100,000 |
| Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp. | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 7,000 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 26.5 | 26.5 | 26 | 26.5 | 252,200 |
| Global Equities Inc. | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 200,000 |
| Guoco Holdings (Phils.) | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 10,000 |
| Ionics Inc. | 6.9 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 113,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | 0.7 | 0.72 | 0.7 | 0.71 | 10,060,000 |
| Multitech Inv. Corp. | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 120,000 |
| Metro Pacific Corp. | 0.31 | 0.32 | 0.31 | 0.32 | 2,610,000 |
| Music Corp. | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.33 | 0.34 | 5,850,000 |
| Solid Group Inc. | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.34 | 0.34 | 220,000 |
| Roxas Holdings Inc. | 0.81 | 0.81 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 350,000 |
| Tanduay Holdings Inc. | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 120,000 |
| Wellex Industries Inc. | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 40,000 |
| Waterfront Phils. Inc. | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 150,000 |
| Zeus Holdings Inc. | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 80,000 |
| MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING | | | | | |
| Federal Chemicals Inc. | 7.4 | 7.4 | 7 | 7.1 | 214,000 |
| SPI Technologies Inc. | 13.5 | 13.5 | 13.5 | 13.5 | 161,900 |
| HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE | | | | | |
| Belle Corp. | 0.47 | 0.57 | 0.47 | 0.53 | 4,870,000 |
| Grand Plaza Hotel Corp. | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 1,000 |
| Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc. | 0.16 | 0.16 | 0.16 | 0.16 | 100,000 |
| BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr) | 23 | 23.75 | 23 | 23.5 | 2,630,700 |
| Equitable PCI Bank-War | 1.72 | 1.92 | 1.72 | 1.9 | 927,000 |
| RFM Corp.-Pref. | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 1,000 |
| Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants | 0.005 | 0.0055 | 0.0048 | 0.005 | 94,000,000 |
| OTHERS | | | | | |
| Centro Escolar University | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 51,000 |
| Far Eastern University | 400 | 400 | 400 | 400 | 40 |
| PROPERTY | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.65 | 7,145,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc. | 0.21 | 0.22 | 0.21 | 0.22 | 1,530,000 |
| Cyber Bay Corp. | 0.34 | 0.34 | 0.34 | 0.34 | 280,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 230,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 1.82 | 1.82 | 1.8 | 1.82 | 801,000 |
| SM Development Corp. | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 100,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.2 | 6.2 | 12,154,000 |
| Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc. | 0.195 | 0.195 | 0.195 | 0.195 | 20,000 |
| MINING | | | | | |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. A | 0.38 | 0.39 | 0.38 | 0.39 | 90,000 |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. B | 0.55 | 0.6 | 0.55 | 0.6 | 70,000 |
| Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't. | 2.7 | 3 | 2.7 | 3 | 51,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 0.0032 | 0.0032 | 0.0032 | 0.0032 | 5,000,000 |
| Polar Mines & Dev't Corp. | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 3,000,000 |
| OIL | | | | | |
| Interport Res. B | 0.0034 | 0.0034 | 0.0034 | 0.0034 | 1,000,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. A | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 21,000,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 5,000,000 |
| Pacifica | 0.014 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 1,000,000 |

| | SHARES | VALUE (P) |
|---|---|---|
| Banks & Fin Svc | 2,625,620 | 113,312,900.00 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 201,350,590 | 305,658,210.00 |
| PRO | 22,260,000 | 111,770,250.00 |
| Mining | 8,211,000 | 279,500.00 |
| OIL | 28,000,000 | 173,400.00 |
| GRAND TOTALS: | 262,447,210 | 531,194,260.00 |

| | AVERAGES | |
|---|---|---|
| Banks & Fin Svc | 492.92 | UP 6.79 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 1,565.29 | UP 8.16 |
| PRO | 491.70 | DOWN 3.97 |
| Mining | 1,027.21 | UNCH 0.00 |
| OIL | 1.97 | UNCH 0.00 |
| All Shares Index | 689.23 | DOWN 7.01 |
| Composite | 1,145.97 | UP 6.10 |

NO. OF ADVANCES: 30; NO. OF DECLINES: 22; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 31;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 83; NO. OF TRADES: 2,232

# Sale of Uniwide theme parks gets clearance

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved the sale of theme parks owned by Naic Resources & Development Corp., a member of the distressed Uniwide group of companies, to Westech Ltd., SEC Associate Commissioner Juanita Cueto has announced.

Uniwide interim receiver committee chair Monico Jacob earlier requested approval of the sale to retire Naic Resources' debts to Asian Alliance Investment Corp.

After settlement, AAIC will release stocks of Uniwide Holdings Inc. and Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp. and some properties in Ternate, Cavite as outlined in an amended rehabilitation plan approved by a panel of SEC lawyers last year.

Jacob said P2 billion out of Uniwide's P11-billion debt would be liquidated following the sale of the theme parks, payment-in-kind arrangements for the settlement of the Uniwide group's P1.582 billion in debt to three banks and payment of the remaining creditors of Uniwide's First Paragon Corp.

Some banks have opposed the sale of the theme parks. The Bank of the Philippine Islands asked the SEC to deny the request for approval of the sale since "it does not appear sensible to partially execute or implement a rehabilitation plan that will create discrimination among creditors and whose viability is questionable."

The SEC has not yet approved the interim receiver committee's second amended rehabilitation plan that calls for payment-in-kind arrangements to reduce the Uniwide's debt burden and make the retailer's operations sustainable even without an investor pumping in fresh capital.

Documents filed with the SEC showed that Uniwide had a combined liability of P11.1 billion and total assets amounting to P19 billion.

*Elena R. Torrijos*

# After brutal year, hope seen for technology

SAN FRANCISCO—The high-technology industry suffered perhaps, its most brutal year ever in 2001, but analysts say the industry has become more important than ever and will return to growth soon.

According to the consulting firm Challenger Gray and Christmas, the meltdown in the dot-com and high-tech sector has caused nearly 1.8 million jobs to go up in smoke this year, after 613,000 jobs lost in 2000.

Aside from the dot-com implosion, preliminary figures show worldwide semiconductor revenues are expected to slide 33 percent to $152 billion in 2001, making it the worst decline in the history of the industry, the research group Gartner said.

Though dot-com companies began folding in late 2000, the effects of that crash seem to have created a sustained ripple through the rest of the technology industry in 2001. The effect of that crash was exacerbated by the US recession, which started in March.

Once, stalwart tech companies like Hewlett-Packard, Cisco Systems, Yahoo and others were forced to sack thousands of employees and warned investors of more losing quarters.

The October bankruptcy of high-speed Internet service ExciteAtHome just highlighted a year of bankruptcies and closing, which included the demise of WebVan, an online grocery service that folded under a billion-dollar mountain of debt.

A recent report by investment house Morgan Stanley said manufacturers of computer chips, the brains behind all technology devices, "will be locked in a rolling recessionary environment for another 18 months or so."

According to the Yankee Group, a high-tech consultancy, corporate spending on information technology is expected to show a 1.1-percent decline in 2001, the first ever decline in such expenditures since 1954.

Other late year indicators of a continuing slump: Despite multimillion dollar sales pushes by Nintendo and Microsoft of their new home video game consoles, two game titles for the Sony's older PlayStation 2 topped November video game sales.

But not all is doom and gloom.

Though the business of the Internet was slack, cultural embrace of the online world seems to be continuing.

A sweeping 2001 survey conducted by the University of California found that 72.3 percent of Americans were now online, up from 66.9 percent in 2000, a trend mirrored in other countries. E-mail and instant messaging, reading the news and other activities continued to be the most reported activities online. UCLA researchers expect these trends to continue into 2002.

But Ipsos-Reid, an international research consultancy, reported this year that the worldwide growth rate of the home online market is slowing.

The consultancy blamed the lack of reliable and cheap Internet connections in some countries. Plus, said the company, there was "simply a lack of interest in the Internet's benefits" in the remaining unwired households. *AFP*

# US consumers upbeat despite slump

WASHINGTON—The US economy contracted at an even sharper rate than previously thought in the third quarter of the year, but new data raised hopes that cheerful consumers would lift the economy out of recession.

The Commerce Department said on Friday that gross domestic product, the broadest measure of the economy's health, fell at an annual rate of 1.3 percent in the July-to-September period. That was worse than the government's previous estimate of a 1.1-percent drop.

But analysts were looking past that report and focusing on the economy's future, which they said appeared brighter with consumers in good spirits.

"Consumers are trying to keep this economic ship afloat," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo Bank in Minneapolis. "I think they will succeed in plugging more and more holes in this economy."

The view that consumers, whose spending drives two-thirds of economic activity, could ride to the rescue of the troubled economy gained traction after the release of a closely watched report from the University of Michigan.

The university's consumer sentiment index rose to 88.8 in December from 83.9 in November, marking the third straight monthly rise.

The Michigan index helped push up stock prices. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 50 points or half a percent to 10,035. Bond prices fell.

Analysts said that successes in the war in Afghanistan have helped boost sentiment among consumers, who were shell-shocked in the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

A big unknown is whether the happier sentiment will translate into strength in spending, which has followed an uneven pattern since the Sept. 11 attacks.

Richard Curtin, director of the Michigan survey, told reporters in a conference call that consumers may not necessarily notice a big difference between the economic climate right now and conditions early next year, which are expected to be sluggish.

"The good news is that the overall level of pessimism among consumers has declined," Curtin said. "The bad news is that consumers expect the pace of economic growth to be so slow that it will not significantly improve economic conditions in the year ahead." *Reuters*

# Mobile to exceed fixed line in China

BEIJING—The number of mobile phone subscribers in China could exceed the figure for fixed-line users as early as next year, a senior government official was quoted as saying by state press Saturday.

Mobile users would surpass fixed line customers "next year or 2003," predicted Xie Linzhen, a senior information technology official at the Ministry of Information Industry, the China Daily said.

Around the same time, mobile phone revenues would amount for half of all income in China's telecommunications sector, he added.

According to government figures, China had 175 million fixed-line telephone users at the end of October.

It has long been predicted that mobile subscribers—of whom there are now almost 140 million, according to latest official figures—would overtake this figure, although earlier predictions said this might only happen around 2005.

One of the reasons for the change in telephone habits is the red tape involved in setting up a fixed line, meaning many people prefer mobiles.

Market reforms and increasing opportunities in various corners of the large country have also put millions—perhaps hundreds of millions—on the move.

Mobile phones have become an important tool for the increasingly mobile population, many of whom work away from home and travel for work. *AFP*

# Crisis takes toll on greeting cards

SINGAPORE—The number of Christmas cards sent by post in Singapore is expected to fall by 20 percent to about 8 million partly due to people scrimping amid a biting recession, a report said Saturday.

Singapore Post said that aside from the economic downturn, the rising use of electronic mail to send greeting cards was also to blame, according to the Straits Times newspaper.

More than 10 million Christmas cards were sent last year and the number is expected to fall to 8 million this year, the report said.

Telecommunications company StarHub Pte. Ltd. said it sent out e-cards for the first time this year to business partners and customers.

But technology firm Raynet prefers to remain traditional, its managing director TC Pang told the newspaper.

"Traditional cards add color to the festive mood, which is already too simplified," he said.

Singapore has been hammered into recession by the US-led economic downturn and the slump in the electronics industry. It is facing a 3-percent contraction in gross domestic product this year. *AFP*

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| 8. | MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B" | 300,000.00 | - |
| 9. | MANILA POLO CLUB | Please call | 2,700,000.00 |
| 10. | MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB (Individual) | Please call | - |
| 11. | MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB (Corporate) | Please call | Please call |
| 12. | MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A" | 700,000.00 | - |
| 13. | MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B" | 750,000.00 | Please call |
| 14. | METRO CLUB "B" | - | 100,000.00 |
| 15. | MIMOSA C-2 | 350,000.00 | - |
| 16. | MT. MALARAYAT "C" | 600,000.00 | - |
| 17. | ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C" | 350,000.00 | - |
| 18. | PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB | 140,000.00 | - |
| 19. | ROCKWELL | 550,000.00 | - |
| 20. | RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "B" | 250,000.00 | Please call |
| 21. | STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB | 1,600,000.00 | - |
| 22. | SUBIC YATCH CLUB | 750,000.00 all in | - |
| 23. | SHERWOOD HILLS "A" | 130,000.00 | 90,000.00 |
| 24. | SHERWOOD HILLS "C" | - | 250,000.00 |
| 25. | TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB | - | 750,000.00 |
| 26. | TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS GOLF CLUB | - | 650,000.00 |
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| 31. | THE COUNTRY CLUB | 4,000,000.00 | - |
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# Economists debate if stimulus is needed

WASHINGTON—As a massive stimulus measure to help spur recovery from recession and the Sept. 11 attacks appeared dead in Congress, economists are now debating whether the struggling US economy needs it after all.

Although a report released Friday showed a 1.3-percent rate of economic decline in the third quarter—the worst since 1991—some analysts said the economy was on a path to recovery already in early or mid-2002.

The economy is expected to recover, thanks to the 11 interest-rate cuts by the Federal Reserve, the first installment of the $1.3-trillion tax-cut bill enacted this year and other spending programs.

"Lack of additional stimulus won't delay the timing of recovery, which we expect will arrive by spring. But it could affect the strength of the recovery," said Merrill Lynch chief economist Bruce Steinberg.

"There is already a huge amount of policy stimulus in the pipeline. Roughly $90 billion of fiscal stimulus has already been enacted. Despite the lack of additional fiscal stimulus, we still believe that the economy can be growing at a 5-percent rate by the second half of 2002."

Congress adjourned for the yearend holidays without delivering a stimulus bill. In October, the House passed a $100-billion package, and then reworked it in recent days in an effort to win over Democratic senators.

But in the Senate, where Democrats had backed a separate $73-billion measure heavy on aid for the unemployed and health care benefits, no deal was reached.

US Chamber of Commerce president Thomas Donohue criticized the Senate for failing to act.

"If there was ever a crucial time to put aside partisanship for the sake of our weakened economy, it is now," said Donohue. "Unfortunately, due to the impasse in the Senate, our nation's struggling businesses and unemployed workers are left with a lump of coal this Christmas."

But economists appeared mainly unperturbed by the lack of action.

"The failure by Congress to pass a fiscal stimulus program will curtail growth slightly, but conditions are still in place for a strong recovery starting early next year," said Henry Willmore of Barclays Capital.

"The lack of a new stimulus package does little to change our positive growth outlook for the United States in 2002," said economist Robert Sinche of Citibank.

Alfred Goldman of AG Edwards noted, "The stimulus bill would have been icing on the cake, but the economy and the market will continue to heal without it."

Goldman added that "some analysts suggest that no bill was better than a bad bill as the negative impact of politics had more than overshadowed the potential economic benefits."

Stan Shipley, a senior economist at Merrill Lynch, said a stimulus would nonetheless be an important boost to help an ailing US economy pull itself out of recession.

"Even our robust 5-percent growth forecast is still sub-par growth," Shipley said. "GDP usually grows 6 to 7 percent immediately following a recession. A stimulus package would get us back to where we should be."

But Shipley said with Congress adjourning for the Christmas holidays, the economic stimulus was likely dead.

"If you can't get it now, I don't see how it will be passed in January or February," he said. *AFP*

# KT, Microsoft to offer up-to-date Web services

SEOUL—Microsoft Corp. and Korea Telecom Corp. have announced the formation of a strategic alliance to provide up-to-date integrated Web services in South Korea.

The alliance, which includes a $500-million investment in Korea Telecom by Microsoft, will enable and accelerate the delivery of a rich variety of Web services to the South Korean market, the two companies said.

"This is a great opportunity for our customers to gain access to all their data, resources and favorite services at any time on any device," Bill Gates, chair of Microsoft, said in a statement.

The venture will allow "KT, Microsoft and an array of partners to deliver dynamic solutions and services to this globally connected community," Gates added.

Lee Sang-Chul, president and CEO of KT, said the alliance would contribute to delivering on the company's goal of full privatization of KT by the end of June next year.

Under the agreement, Microsoft will buy $500 million of bonds with warrants of KT, which accounts for a 3.2-percent stake in the country's largest telecommunications provider.

In addition, KT raised $1.32 billion by selling convertible bonds overseas. The proceeds from the sales will come in early January, KT officials said.

Through the sales, Korea Telecom and the government delivered on their promise to sell an 11.8-percent government stake in Korea Telecom by the end of the year as part of a privatization program.

The government plans to sell the remaining 28.3-percent government stake in Korea Telecom by the end of next June, turning the former state monopoly into a private company. *AFP*

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# How to build self-confidence for the New Year

ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

‘Get started. Count your blessings. Be thankful for all that you have. Make an honest assessment of where you are right now’

HOW did you celebrate Jesus' birthday yesterday? Are you too tired now to do anything? Remember that the fun and more hectic part, New Year's Day, is still to come.

When you think New Year, you think New Year's resolutions. When you think New Year's resolutions, you remember that you break them more than you honor them. As a year ender, our special topic is Building Self-Confidence to Make Good Your New Year's Resolutions. Our reference is the book "Building Personal Effectiveness for Professional Success" by Paul R. Timm. Here's a list of ten things that you can do to be more effective.

1. Get started. Count your blessings. Be thankful for all that you have. Make an honest assessment of where are you right now. What are you doing that you want to continue doing or stop doing? What do you want to start doing? What are your strengths and weaknesses? What might help or hinder you from realizing your goals?

2. Realize that you are in control of what happens to your life. Likewise, you have the power to influence those aspects of your life that you do not control. You have the power to make decisions about your life—career, spiritual, social, love, financial, psychological, mental, and with the help of science and technology, even physical.

3. Check your resolutions. Are they specific, measurable, action-oriented, results-oriented and time and resource bound? Are you absolutely sure they are what you want to do? Do you have the inclinations and resources to do your resolutions? Do you have the personal values to sustain your efforts until the end? Do you accept the consequences of your intended actions?

## RECIPES*for* LEARNING

By
Moje Ramos-Aquino

4. Assess yourself. Do you have the temperament and personality to put your resolutions to action and stay with them? How assertive are you? Are you able to make decisions on the use of your time and talents? Are you able to do what needs to be done and not do what others tell you to do? Are you able to focus and stay on track for long periods of time? Can you be pleasantly direct in your communication?

5. Assess your communication style. Are you receptive to all kinds of feedback, positive and negative? Cultivate your active listening skills. Be non-defensive and take things in stride. Actually ask for feedback and ask for more. Give your honest reaction to feedback. Ask for clarification and elaboration. Remember that feedback is a gift. Be thankful for the gift.

6. Break your resolution into doable chunks. Prioritize. Make a "to do" list and step by step activities. Allocate your time, talents and resources to your different activities.

7. Just do it.

8. Give yourself appropriate rewards for little successes towards achieving your resolutions.

9. Adjust your goals when necessary. The main intent of your New Year's resolutions might as well be written in stone but the nuts of bolts of it are subject to change according to circumstances around you that you can not control or influence. Don't sulk, just move on.

10. Congratulations! You have gone this far, you are ready to make fresh resolutions not only for the new year but for a better you. Go ahead and write those New Year's resolutions. It is better to have them and get the chance to do them or break them than not have any New Year's resolutions at all. Your life will become boring.

Happy New Year and may you stay happy, healthy and wise always.

This year has been very a good year for me and my family. There are some people who have significantly touched my life and made it more wonderful than it already is. Let me just mention them in random as I remember them now and what my allotted column space could hold. If your name is not here, it is assuredly in my heart and mind. Benita Fernandez-Ramos, Gigie and Roddy Peñalosa, Dr. Michael "Pogi" Carandang, Ben and Lin Liboro, Rey Sarmenta, Beth & Manny Canlas, Joyce Haring, Jennifer Homer, Mila Fadri, Amy Agaton, Tess Rojas, Ernie Espinosa, Norma Montalvo, Jennifer Colambo, Ronjie Aquino, Adrian Aquino, Romy Posadas, Bong Nabong, Eric Comsti, Marivic Roldan, Mila Cardona, Jane Murillo, Michelle, Jess Dy, Dr. Jessie Imelda Foronda, KGO sis Malou Amante, Raquel Jacobo, Salve Callanga, Merle Pajarillo, Mabel Agito, Nitz Braza and Alma de Leon, Rico de Manzana, Leo Espardinez, Nelson Torio, Pam Barrameda, Noli Payos, Fe Panlileo, Abel Ulanday, Reggie Reyes, Roche Leonor, Alicia Ynez, Mulco Manyama, Ed Manansala, Jona Ang, Armand Areza, Alma Mendoza, Fe Aglipay, Maya Bañez, Mabel Aglipay, Atty. Nas Khan, Chito San Mateo, Shirman Tan, Sandy Prieto, Aling Mary Syo, Dr./Prof. Jess Ramos, Chairman Bonjing Fernandez, Robin Williams, Julia Roberts, FPHC's Cecille, Jun and Jorachel, Mela Chupungco, Sonny Coloma, Charles Handy, Jack Philips, Dee Hock, Dr. Harvey Uy, Dr. Bobby Ang, fellow FilChi members Lily Lim Chua, Rosalind Wee, Judy Sy, Rosalina Tan, Betty Aw, Lilia Hao, Nancy Tang, Jean Yao and Tessie Yapson, Edith Cabalu, Rosa Bairan, Liza Hizon, Jackie Galvez, Dona Pellobello, Jenny, Jay Calso, Joey and Ochie Cosio, Ethel Bondoc, Tere Tañega, Melvin Tomas, Pepito Galang, Ingque Marcelo, Mike Idioma, Jun Alba, Gibbs Generoso, Rosie Tabuena, Vicky Martinez, Tonton Benitez, Gemma and Joven Aquino, Rey Mababangloob, Sammy Yap, Orly Baraquio, Grace Siducon, Mario Ponce de Leon, Ruth Tan, Dr. Mirriam Quirante, Sylvia Luz, Corky delos Santos, Chit Limcolioc, Liza Clarete, Marcia Lalic, Rita Ang, Tanya Peralta, Tito Mapa, Rene Mayol, Paul Blas, Tammy Tomista, Jim Castro, Loi Echeveria, Hector Fajardo, Amy Gabriel, Leah Gildoro, Ellen Marbella, Beverly Vergel, Carla Sison, Gerry Kaimo, Tita Lubi, Herbie Sanciangco, Aabe Nuncio, Bogart Gaurana, Boni Afortunado, Chat Macapanton, Edwin Espiritu, Arnold Jallores, Judge L. Veneracion, Milalin Javelana, Richard Cases, Ricky Garcia, Sister Pilar Verzosa, Venus Quevedo, Arnie Ferrer, Tonton Fernandez, Tatoy Fernandez. Mang Luis and Dado, Nora Geniston, Blesilda Cruz, Venus Tiamzon. My list is much longer but for lack of precious space.

Thank God for family and friends.

*(Send feedback to* Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com*)*

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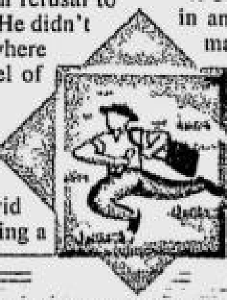
# Dinosaurs at work face extinction

By Ronald C.

> 'There are moments when changing with the times is the way to go'



POSTCARDS FROM THE CORPORATE EDGE

A SOCIAL decorum-impaired person once called me that—a dinosaur—for my stubborn refusal to own a cell phone for the longest time. He didn't realize how much his barb struck me where it hurt the most—in my Achilles' heel of insecurities.

### Resistance

Because he said it while I was busy working, the analogy with the workplace setting was not lost on me. My avid fan unwittingly implied that, true to being a modern-day Luddite, I am afraid of change. And with the world of work moving at a quicksilver pace, I might not be able to cope and I would fall by the wayside.

Alright, the remark was just about buying a cell phone, nothing more. But if I am inordinately resentful, it's because the unkind pronouncement might have a ring of truth to it. Resistance to little increments of change may be indicative of one's resistance to major overhauls in the future, like a shake up of the organization, be it retrenchment or restructuring, a streamlining of the workflow or process reengineering.

If being fashionably hip and updated on what's in and what's out, be it bars, music or movies, may be a clue to a person's receptivity to change, I am proud to say that in regard the latter, I'm not dead as a dodo or a dinosaur for that matter.

### Real dinosaurs

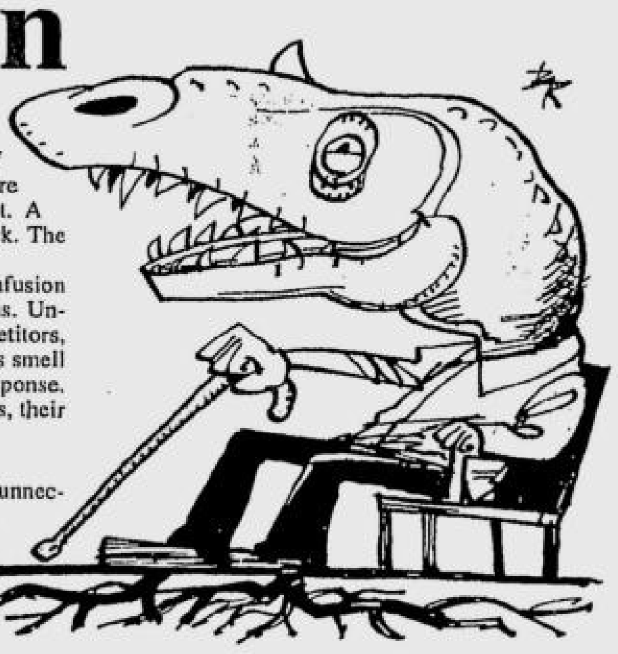
The real dinosaurs in the workplace are the Tyrannosaurus rex—those who refuse to change at all costs. They are usually senior people or prematurely old and cantankerous personnel with set ways of thinking and doing things. They have long been comfortable with the status quo that they wouldn't dare rock the boat. Their abilities are usually limited to their specific task; their early brushes with success have stunted their further growth. Complacency is their trademark and "tried-and-tested" their rallying cry.

Where there is no desire to hurdle greater and bigger challenges—the stuff of life's excitement and adventures—there is no room for continuous improvement. A spine that is inflexible issues a loud crack. The T. rex's inevitable fate is extinction.

This eventuality is presaged by the infusion of young blood into the company's veins. Unfailingly, the new hires are seen as competitors, out to get the jobs of the oldies. The dinos smell bad blood, thus the flight-or-fright response. They foist seniority as their strongest suits, their sole basis for superiority.

### Resentment

Things further sour when they harbor unnecessary resentment and fear in their hearts. What is strictly professional, they take as personal. Now they foresee either a resignation or a forced retirement—theirs.



Watch how a dinosaur hesitates to share the little that he knows, afraid to delegate tasks lest these might be taken away from him sooner or later. In this light, we can view him as a victim, an unfortunate casualty of a changing system, someone who's unable to leapfrog the competition.

However, it would be a mistake viewing all these in terms of Darwinian evolution. The issue here is one of attitude, particularly the resistance to change in corporate culture and not one's natural predisposition or inability to adapt. Corporate dinosaurs are dinosaurs by choice—willing to stagnate, unwilling to take risks, and blind to other possible options.

Someone should tell dinos that, while certain truths about beauty, goodness and love never change with the vicissitudes of life and the vagaries of time, there are moments when changing with the times is the way to go, a matter of death and survival. Change is certainly not bad if it is for the better.

*(Send contributions to Postcards to* rreyes@inquirer.com.ph.*)*

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# The making...

(From page B8)

**team?**

**Collins:** The daily grind of collecting data and doing analyses. There is a lot of tedium in research.

**RGR: Did the team (and did you) at any point feel any discouragement in the whole process of this research?**

**Collins:** Not to my knowledge. There was always a deep sense of faith that we would eventually get to the end and have meaningful things to say.

**RGR: What kept your team moving on?**

**Collins:** The joy of discovery and the importance of the project. Plus, we were really committed to each other as a group. I think the chimps really enjoyed working with each other. I think we really had fun.

**RGR: What insights/realizations do you have now after everything is completed?**

**Collins:** Great question. I think, for one, that Level 5 leadership is more widespread than I realized. As I wrote for the Conference Board annual essay, earlier this autumn:

"I used to think of these leaders as rare birds, almost freaks of nature. But then, a funny thing happened after a seminar where I shared the Level 5 finding and bemoaned the lack of Level 5 leaders. After the session, a number of people stopped by to give examples of Level 5 leaders they'd observed or worked with. Then again, at another seminar, the same thing happened. Then again, at a third seminar—and a pattern began to emerge. It turns out that many people have experienced Level 5 leadership somewhere in their development—a Level 5 sports coach, a Level 5 platoon commander, a Level 5 boss, a Level 5 entrepreneur, a Level 5 CEO. There is a common refrain: 'I couldn't understand or put my finger on what made him so effective, but now I understand: he was a Level 5.' People began to clip articles and send e-mails with examples of people they think of as Level 5 leaders, past or present: Orin Smith of Starbucks Coffee, Joe Torre of the New York Yankees, Kristine McDivitt of Patagonia, John Whitehead of Goldman Sachs, Frances Hesselbein of The Drucker Foundation, Jack Brennan of Vanguard, John Morgridge of Cisco Systems, former Secretary of State George Shultz, and so on. My list of Level 5 leaders began to grow exponentially.

Then it dawned on me, *our problem is not a shortage of Level 5 leaders.* They exist all around us. Like the drawing of two faces that transforms itself into a vase, depending on how you look at the picture, Level 5 leadership jumps out at us as soon as we change how we look at the world and alter our assumptions about how it best works.

Our problem lies in the fact that our culture has fallen in love with the idea of the celebrity CEO. Charismatic egotists who swoop in to save companies grace the covers of major magazines because they are much more interesting to read and write about than people like Darwin Smith and David Maxwell. This fuels the mistaken belief held by many directors that a high-profile, larger-than-life leader is required to make a company great.

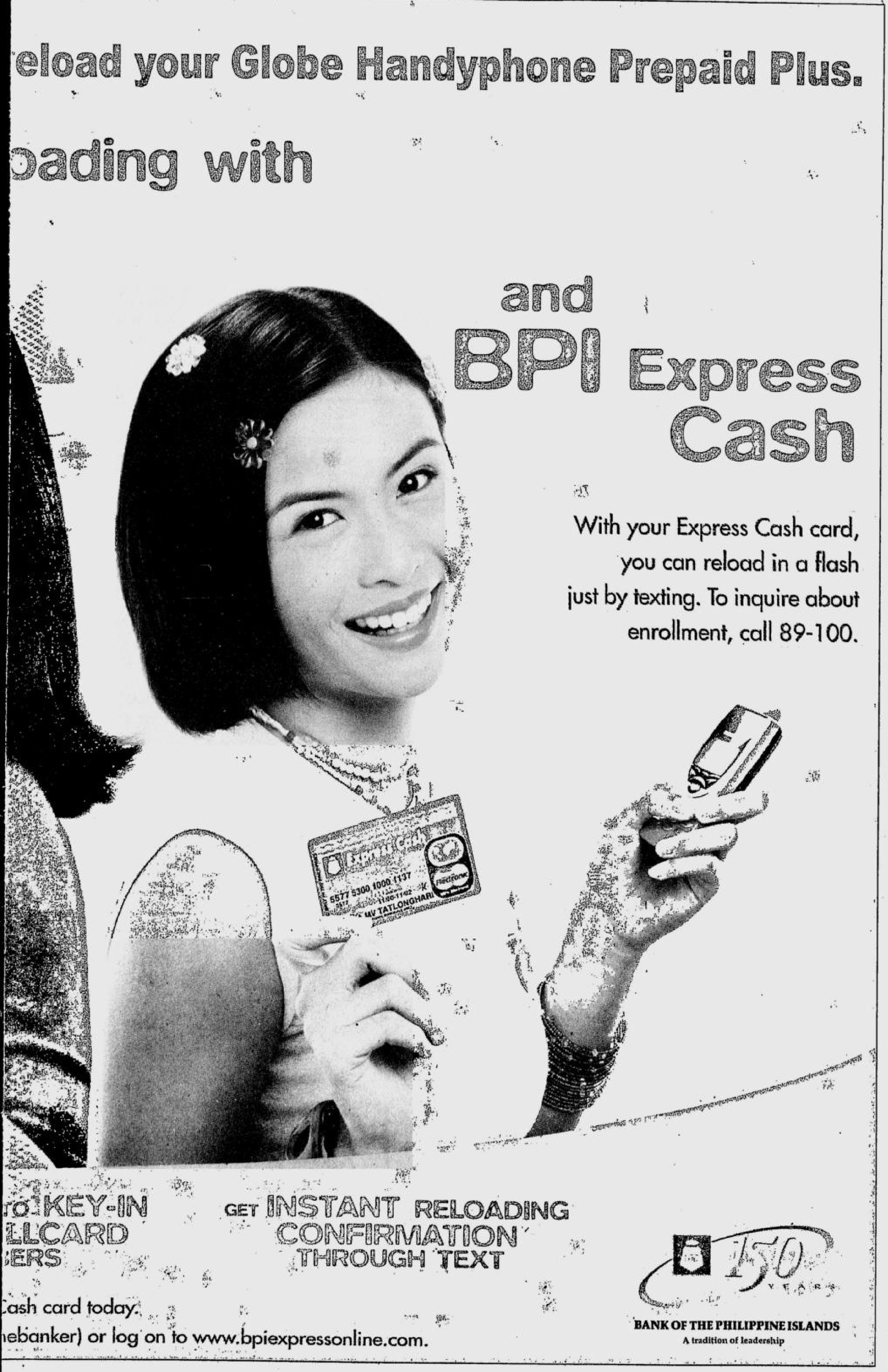
We keep putting people into positions of power who lack the inclination to become Level 5 leaders, and that is one key reason why so few companies ever make a sustained and verifiable shift from good to great."

**RGR: Will there now be a sequel to "Built to Last?" (You said "Good to Great" was a prequel.) And what would it be?**

**Collins:** I don't know what comes next. After the publication of "Built to Last" in 1994, a six-year research project looking at the question of what it takes to build enduring great companies from the ground up, I found myself groping for what to work on next. I love nothing more than the blissful tranquility of complete immersion in a huge project designed to answer a worthy question; having such a project eliminates all existential angst about what to do with myself. I get up every morning and there is "the project," begging for attention like a loyal pet. But with the book's publication, a huge void opened in my life. The residual momentum of the previous project pressed on me, tempting me to dive headfirst into another one. And then, to everyone's surprise, we were blessed with the good luck of a bestseller. As the book took off, the pressure from others to "get on with the next one to capitalize on the last one" began to mount, further fueling my angst about the need for a new question, a new project to fill the gap.

Fortunately, my wife Joanne pulled me out of the muck. "Don't just do a new book to do a new book," she offered. "Don't rush off looking for a new topic. Don't pick a new question. Maybe it would be best to wait until a question *picks you.*"

It was very wise advice, and I decided to follow it. So, to answer your question, I am going to follow that same advice: I'm going to wait until a question picks me.



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***"He loved God with all his heart, served others above himself. On his Birth, his Father called him Home."***

## Rev. Fr. JULIO CESAR "CHIQUI" M. MANALO

**Parish Priest of St. Jude Thaddeus Parish, Pasig City**

*Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on Christmas Day, December 25, 2001.*

His bereaved parents **FIDEL** † & **MARGARITA "MAMENG" M. MANALO**; brothers and sisters **NOEL** & **SALVE**, **QUEENIE** & **BOBOY**; nephews **EC** & **BILLY**; niece **MARGO**; his beloved parishioners, friends and relatives request the pious reader to pray for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the St. Jude Thaddeus Parish Church, Marietta Romeo Village, Pasig City, Metro Manila.

Interment to be announced later.

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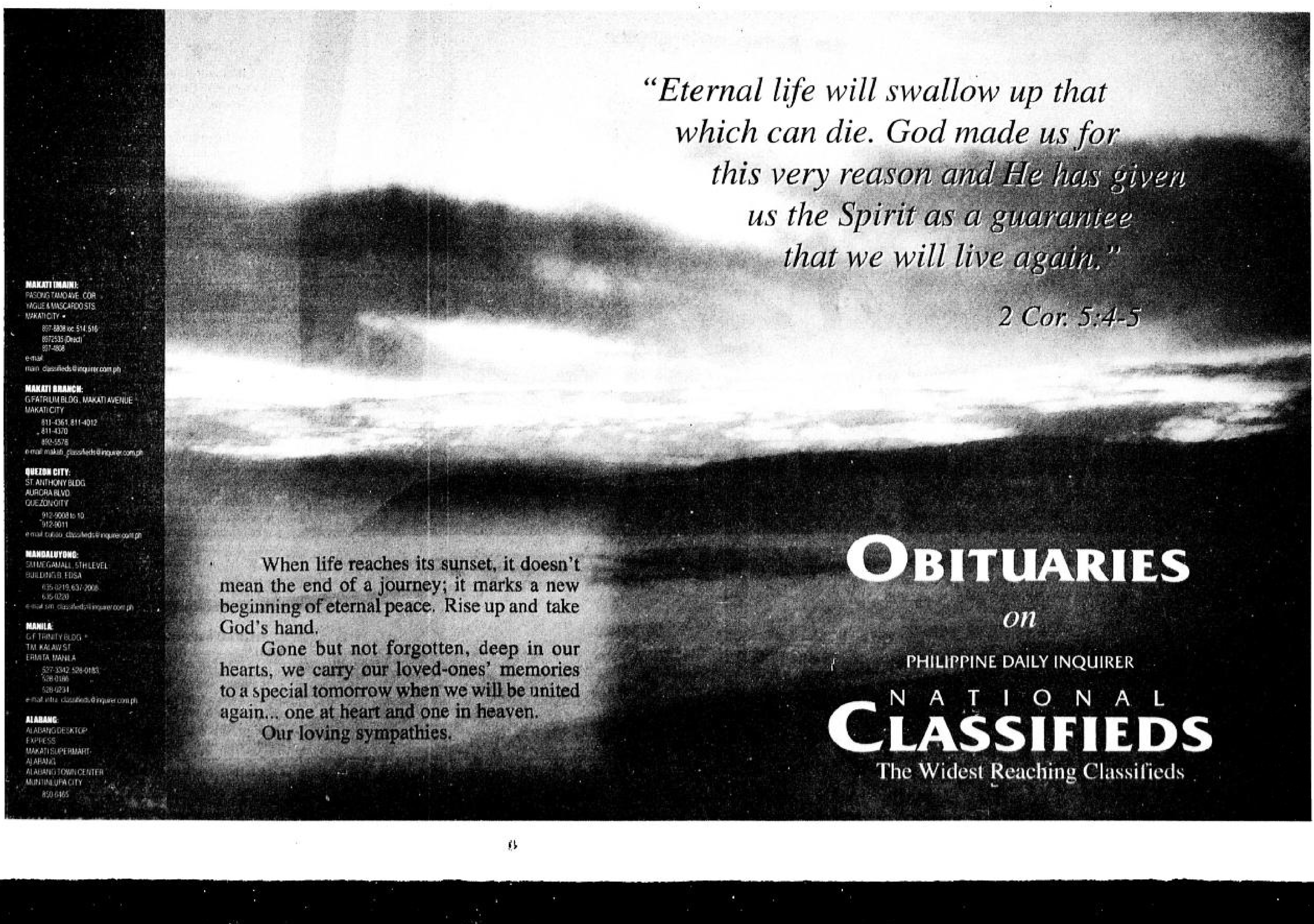
## RODOLFO P. ANDAL

**on his 5th Death Anniversary**

*His widow **ERLINDA V. ANDAL**, their children, children in-law & grandchildren request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.*

*Masses held for his intention on December 27, 2001:*
*Holy Family Parish, Roxas District, Quezon City 6:00 a.m.*
*Sacred Heart Parish, Kamuning, Quezon City 6:00 a.m.*
*St. John Bosco Parish, Makati City 6:30 a.m.*
*St. Ignatius Cathedral, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City 6:30 a.m.*
*St. Jerome Emiliani & Sta. Susanna Parish, Alabang 12:15 p.m.*
*Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati 12:15 p.m.*
*St. James the Great Parish, Ayala Alabang 6:30 p.m.*



*"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."*
2 Cor. 5:4-5

When life reaches its sunset, it doesn't mean the end of a journey; it marks a new beginning of eternal peace. Rise up and take God's hand.

Gone but not forgotten, deep in our hearts, we carry our loved-ones' memories to a special tomorrow when we will be united again... one at heart and one in heaven.

Our loving sympathies.

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PEOPLE at WORK

**RAUL O. MARCELO**, Editor ■ **REGINA GALANG REYES**, Subsection Editor

# The making of Collin's 'Good to Great'

'There was a sense of faith that we would get to the end'

By Regina Galang Reyes

A People at Work Exclusive

WHAT'S so impressive about Jim Collin's latest book "Good to Great" is that it was a massive research and writing undertaking that required a lot of patience and endurance to complete. Thus, like a big-budget, grand film, its making is an object of curiosity for its readers. To satisfy this curiosity, I e-mailed Jim Collins some questions, which he has taken precious time to answer.

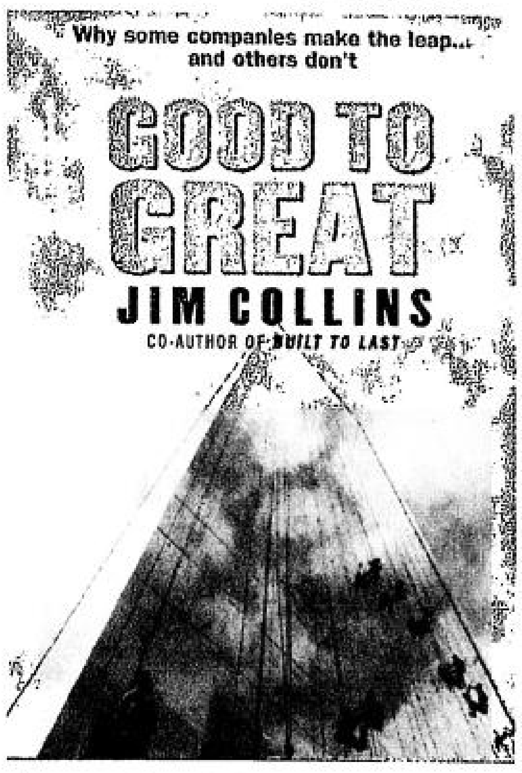
In sharing his experiences on the making of the book, he describes the team management process that has helped the book become a reality and is a model in itself for energizing teams for peak performance. He also reveals his after-book insights on one of the most significant findings of the book—the existence of Level 5 leadership—and how this type of leadership seems to be more widespread that he thought it would be.

Listen to this virtual conversation on the behind-the-book stories on the book that is taking the management field by storm.

**RGR: What were your criteria in selecting researchers for your team? What's the profile of your team?**

**Collins**: We came to call ourselves "The Chimps," in honor of our mascot, Curious George—the curious little chimp who wants to look under the yellow hat, just to see what's there. I wanted people who displayed four basic characteristics: smart, curious, hard working and genetically encoded to be irreverent. I wanted people who would work their brains out in search of the best answers and who would be loyal to the data above all else.

**RGR: Why did it take five years to make? Did you know it would take that long to do the research?**


Why some companies make the leap... and others don't
GOOD TO GREAT
JIM COLLINS
CO-AUTHOR OF BUILT TO LAST

**Collins**: I knew it would take years, as that is the nature of this type of massive research project. In all, we collected and read nearly 6,000 articles, tracked down and interviewed key executives for over 2,000 pages of interview transcripts and did a wide array of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The company selection process alone took six months of work, and another six to pick the comparison companies. If you read the research appendixes, you can see why the project took so long.

Also, we talk in today's world about reducing cycle time. But there is one thing you cannot make go faster: insight and understanding. Insight operates on its own clock, and it is generally a slow clock. We needed time for the ideas and findings to gestate into a solid framework. To be sure that insights and ideas make lasting sense, you need to live with them for awhile.

**RGR: What were your working styles?**

**Collins**: Here is an excerpt for a write-up I did during the middle of the research, for a chapter in a book for the Peter Drucker foundation. It gives a reasonably good description of the process:

"The research teams, usually four to six people, operate in a high-performance, high-energy climate characterized by a powerful sense of team unity and work ethic. During the summer session, research team members frequently work more than forty hours per week—putting forth whatever it takes tq accomplish objectives on time, with thoroughness, accuracy, and quality…

And, yet, this high-performance environment relies almost not at all on the traditional methods of coercion and control. We have no offices or fixed hours; other than team meetings, researchers work on their own, managing their own time... They have no budget constraints; if they need something to get their work done, they simply buy it and get reimbursed. They're not coerced by the carrot of a career path or prospect of long-term employment, as the lab operates under a strict 'no permanent full-time employees' model…And it's not the money; while they're paid better than other graduate research assistants, they earn less per hour than if they spent their summer at a corporation or consulting firm.

**COLLINS** with the author at the 1997 ASTD International Conference and Exposition in SanFrancisco, USA

The whole key to the high performance climate on the research team is mechanisms of commitment and connection rooted in freedom of choice. We operate on a clear set of deadlines and project objectives; yet team members generally select their own deadlines, as people feel much more committed to a deadline that they have a hand in setting…

Most important, we design the work process such that team members must draw from each other's work as the project progresses…

When team members request to miss a key team meeting, they do not ask me for permission; rather, theypersonally call each team member and get his or her consent, and I delegate the power of consent to the team.

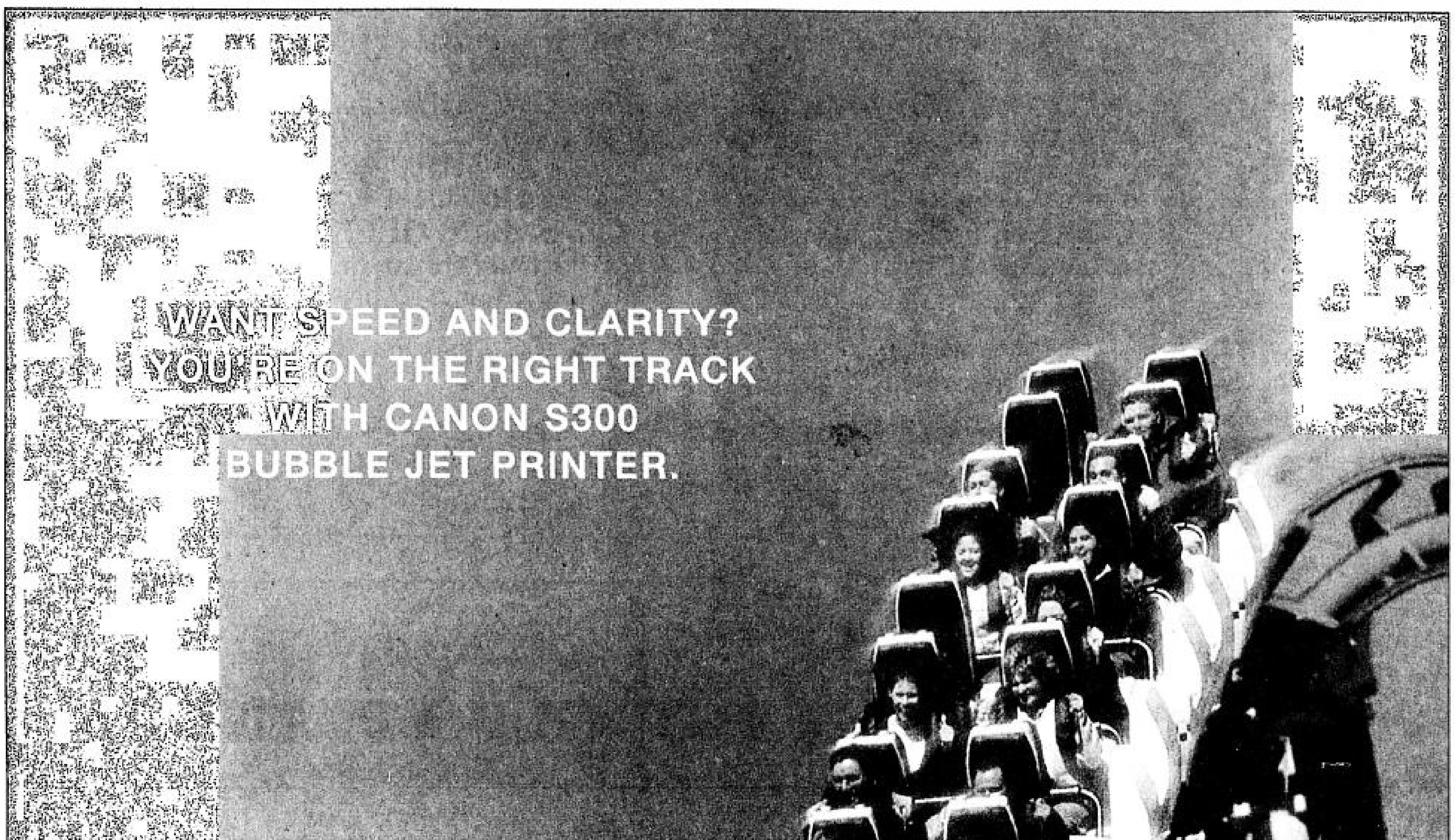
And, as a precursor to all of the above, each person invited to join the team receives a written and verbal orientation on the values, purpose, and performance standards of the team, and is asked to join *only* if he or she can to commit to those principles. Before joining, they're told: If you have any doubt about whether this is the right place for you, then it is in our mutual interest that you decline this opportunity."

**RGR: What were the "highs" of the research team?**

**Collins**: The weekly team meetings, when we would gather to present our emerging findings and to discuss "what it all means." We really had fun in our team meetings. Then, as the framework of ideas came clear, there was the excitement of discovery.

**RGR: What were the "lows" of the research**

THE MAKING/B5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# WHAT A BLAST IT WAS!

It started no less with a bang—the felling of a president—and entered the last quarter, with no less than the felling of two towers. But the year will also be remembered for its technological flair, its rich sights and sounds, and its distinct faces and images. Let 2bU! be your guide to the icons and wonders of 2001

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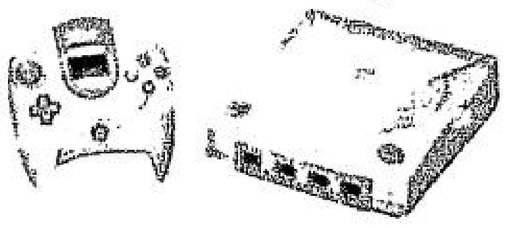

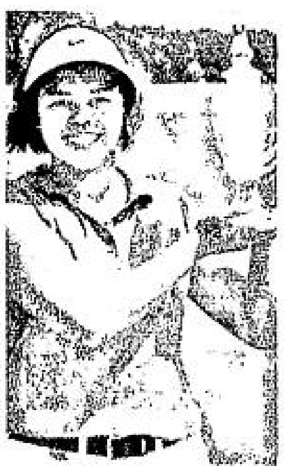

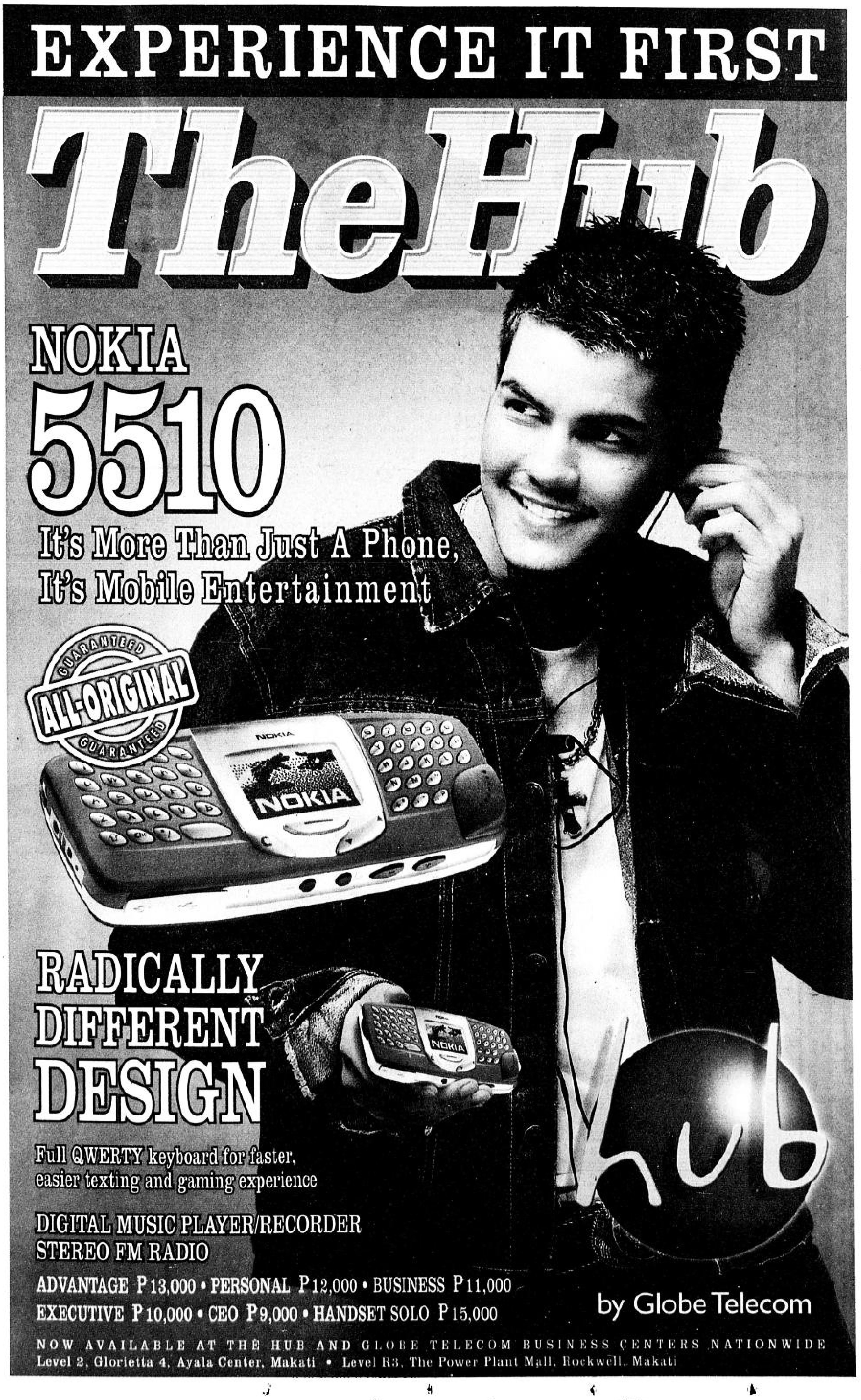
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# SMASH HITS AND DUDS IN CONSUMER TECH IN 2001

**By Gabriel H. Mercado**
*2bU! Correspondent*

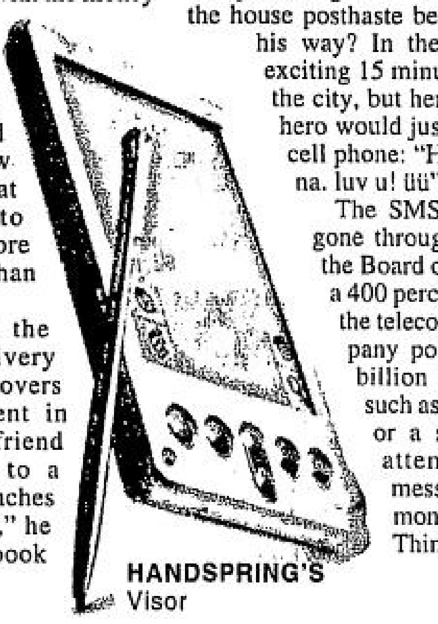
## In 2001, you got viruses that spawned other viruses

PERSONAL digital assistants (PDA)—Casio's Cassiopeia, Compaq's iPaq, Toshiba's Pocket PC, Sony's Clio, HP's Jornada, Handspring's Visor and, of course, Palm's PalmPilot.

More powerful processors, more stable operating systems, a bewildering array of makes and models plus a whopping array of add-ons, such as portable keyboards and digital cameras, have made this year the age of the PDA. No longer purely the CEO's plaything, the PDA has gone beyond its "gee-whiz" expensive toy image into a must-have for the captains of industry as well as those with the money to afford its still steep price tag.

Of course, it can be a boon for the busy person. Aside from its standard features, such as the organizer and address book, you can now easily attach other gadgets that will allow you to use it to communicate as well as add more applications and functions than you ever imagined.

And you have to agree: the snazzy color screen, the silvery finish and designer leather covers make an impressive statement in meetings. A Web designer friend uses one to show designs to a client, and nine out of 10 he clinches the deal. "Works like a charm," he says. Never mind that a notebook has a far better display.


**HANDSPRING'S** Visor

**THE XBOX**

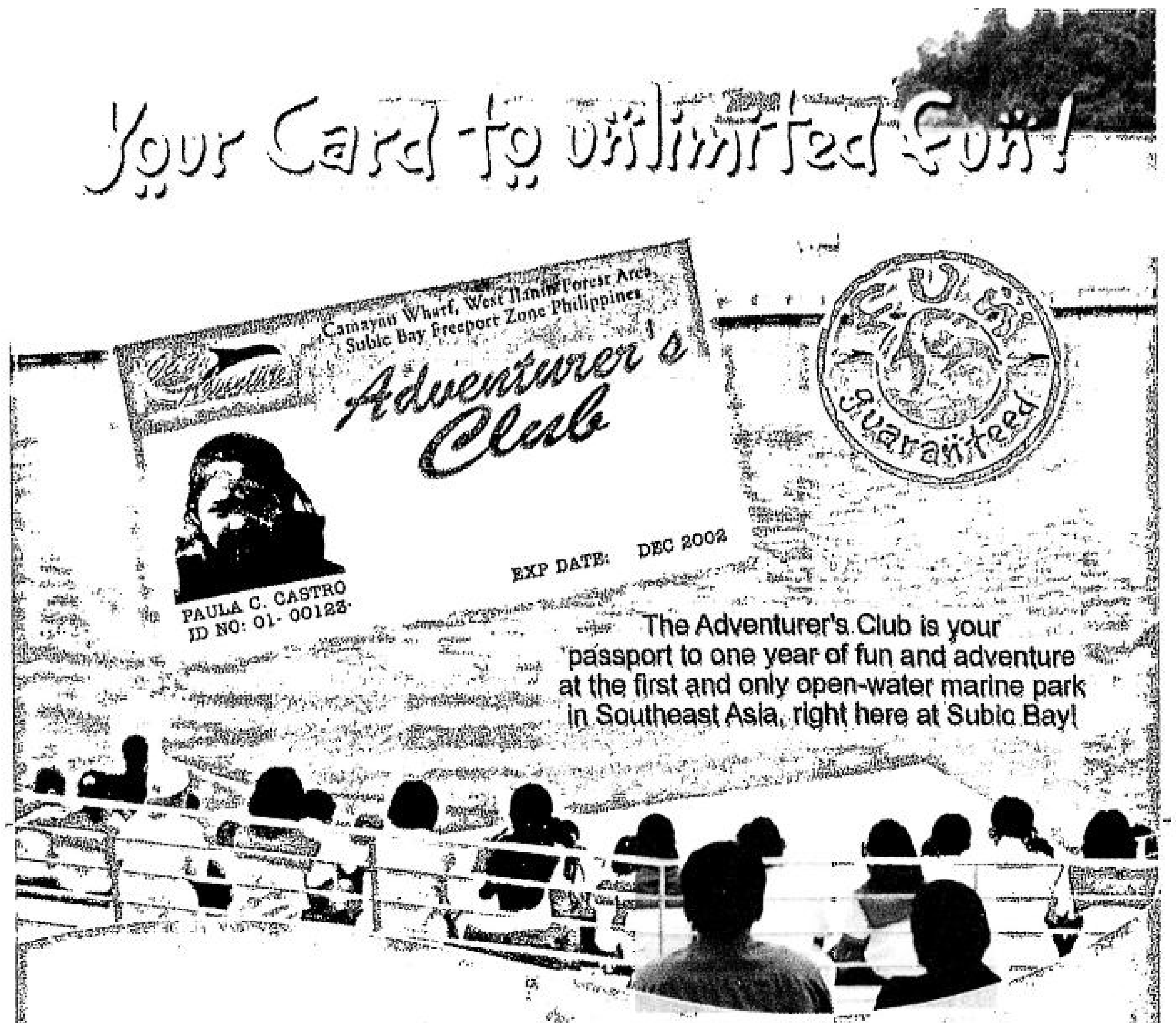
## SMS

SMS (short messaging service) has become so much an integral part of our lives that it is now difficult to imagine how we can manage without it.

I can't watch movies anymore without wondering how the main character's problems would have been so easily licked if s/he had text. The panicking hero has to tell his wife to leave the house posthaste because the bad guy's on his way? In the movie this means an exciting 15 minute reckless drive across the city, but here in the Philippines the hero would just type a message on his cell phone: "Hon, get out bad guy der na. luv u! üü"

The SMS' popularity has really gone through the roof so much so the Board of Investments has listed a 400 percent growth due solely to the telecom companies. One company posts a couple-and-a-half billion in profits, and issues such as a reduction in free SMS or a senator's weak-minded attempt to censor text messages hog headlines for months. Still not convinced? Think "Erap resign."

SMASH / p.C5



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Ocean Adventure is a Division of Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium, Inc., Camayan Wharf, West Ilanin Forest Area, Subic Bay Freeport Zone

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www.Inquirer.net/jobmarket

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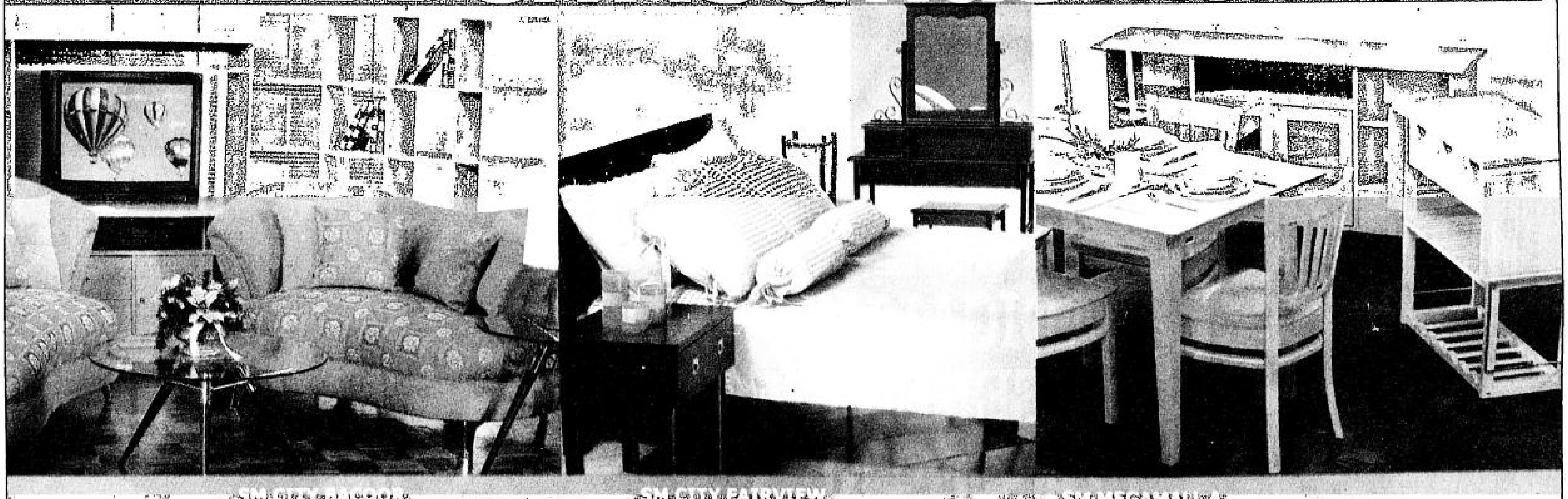

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# Music survives, flourishes despite 2001 tragedies

**By Maui V. Reyes**
*2bU! Correspondent*

HAS the year really flown so quickly? Was it because you stopped and smelled the flowers or counted the days till 2002?

Although the music scene might have seen better days), music proved its power to evolve with the emergence of new acts (Alicia Keys, Nelly Furtado) and the "reinvention" of old ones—Britney Spears sporting reptiles or Bono mixing the old with the new in a tribute single.

So here's to 2001 and more magic to come in 2002!

### January

We love rock 'n' roll! For "Rock in Rio," various musicians share the same stage and **Guns N' Roses** is resurrected, complete with a cartoon short of Axl Rose. **Britney Spears'** potty mouth is exposed to the world after a minor microphone technical problem. Speaking of, the lucky duck gets to do "Walk This Way" with rock legends **Aerosmith** during the Superbowl XXXV halftime, thanks to MTV Productions.

Not all concerts end on a happy note. During Australia's annual Big Day Out Festival, **Limp Bizkit** faces for the second time serious mosh pit madness. Jessica Michali, a 16-year-old fan, dies after injuries at the concert. **Fred Durst** says the organizers refused to comply with the band's safety measures. Limp inevitably pulls out of the tour.

### February

The Grammy's pisses Eminem fans when **Steely Dan** brings home the Album of the Year. It doesn't matter that much to **Eminem**, who, prior to the arrangements for his performance doesn't know that **Elton John** is gay (news already leaks before the show that Eminem and John are doing a duet on "Stan"). Later in the month, Eminem gets two years probation for the June 2000 ICP (Insane Clown Posse) incident. **Jennifer Lopez** tops the movies with her film, "The Wedding Planner," and the Billboard charts with her second album, "J. Lo."

The first of many breakups, **Afghan Whigs** calls it quits, saying the band members simply live too far away from each other (Los Angeles, Cincinnati, Minneapolis). The band has been together for 14 years, with their last album released in 1998. Pepsi gets a new face—Britney Spears. **Courtney Love**, after being sued by Universal for breach of contract, sues the company in return.

### March

MP3 fans begin looking for other sources when **Napster** enforces strict filtering of music on users. The company initially blocked songs on request of record companies, but now has decided to block *every song* until record companies say which songs can be shared. **Puff Daddy** is acquitted of shooting charges filed against him, while rapper **Shyne** is found guilty of assault, reckless endangerment and weapon possession. **Kim Mathers** files for divorce.

U2'S Bono elevates the crowd during the "Elevation Tour."

[illegible]tter: Dave Ma[illegible]s

Adding to this year's string of lawsuits, rapper **Juvenile** is slapped with a $5-million lawsuit after smashing a champagne bottle on someone's head in Miami. The trial will start this coming January. **Madonna's** video, "What it Feels Like For a Girl," directed by her husband, **Guy Ritchie**, generates so much controversy and gets limited airplay (after several weeks, people got tired of it). UK boy band **A1** proves that Limp's not the only one who can have crowd control problems. Four fans die during the band's performance in Jakarta, Indonesia. **Dave Matthews** releases "Everyday," after scrapping a six-months-into-recording album. **U2** make up for their disappointing 1997 "PopMart" tour with their "Elevation Tour 2001."

### April

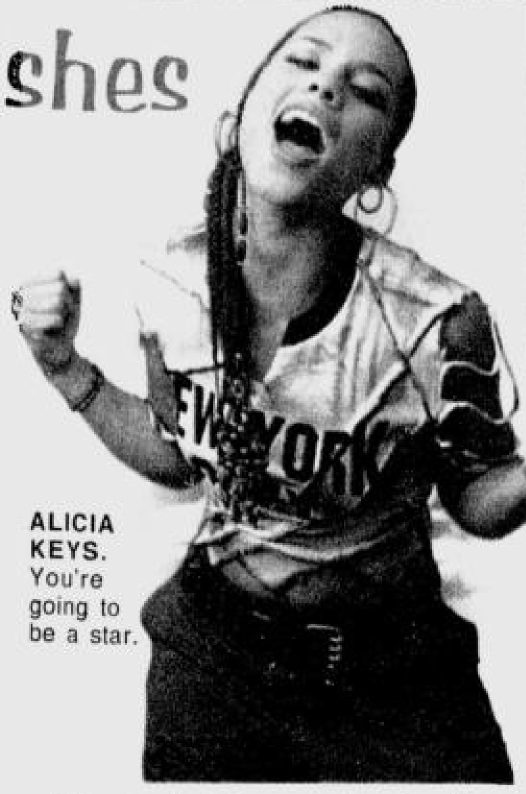
Punk fans mourn the death of **Joey Ramone** (real name Jeffrey Hyman) after his struggle with lymphatic cancer. He dies at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital at 2:40 p.m., with U2 on his player. **Mariah Carey** leaves Columbia and signs with Virgin Records. **Don Henley**, a cofounder of the Recording Artists' Coalition, and **Alanis Morissette** testify against copyright issues along with the RIAA. **Jay-Z** is arrested for illegal gun possession, as well as **REM's Peter Buck**, after assaulting two flight crew members on a trip from Seattle to London. **ODB**, on the other hand, pleads guilty to criminal possession of crack and cocaine stemming from a March 1999 incident. The rapper is sentenced to two to four years in prison.

### May

Who's left of **Rage Against the Machine—Tom Morello, Tim Commerford** and **Brad Wilk**—announce that, together with **Chris Cornel**, they will be forming a band and putting out an album with the guidance of **Rick Rubin**. As if it is not enough that MP3 fans are bawling their eyes out after Napster's membership-fee contract ended, RIAA sues **Aimster** and **Launch** (a Web-based radio) for copyright infringement. The **Online Hip-Hop Awards** are cancelled due to security reasons, and the winners are announced through press releases. Puff Daddy jokingly says the press (and anyone, for that matter) should call him P. Diddy. Emo nerds unite! **Weezer's** long-awaited album, "Weezer" (known as "The Green Album"), is released. MTV proves that trashy women make the grade when **Christina Aguilera, Pink, Mya** and **Lil' Kim** strut their stuff in the "Lady Marmalade" video for the movie "Moulin Rouge."

### June

Local music welcomes two exciting developments. Imago makes its long-awaited debut, "Probably Not, But Most Definitely." **Rivermaya** unveils its three new secret weapons—**Mike Elgar, Kakoi Legaspi** and **Japs Sergio**. A Denver radio station is threatened with a $7,000 fine after the DJ accidentally spins the uncensored version of "The Real Slim Shady." Yet again, the RIAA files a lawsuit against MTVi and XACT Radio for—what else?—copyright infringement. Courtney Love succeeds in preventing the inclusion of an unreleased **Nirvana** track in the group's 45-song special box set. The Hole singer also slaps a lawsuit against ex-Nirvana members **Dave Grohl** and **Kris Novoselic**, stating that the group's contract is void and rights to the music belong to her.


ALICIA KEYS. You're going to be a star.

### July

Madonna goes on tour. Does that need a description? **Mariah Carey** breaks down on the set of her sad, sad, *sad* film, "Glitter." Sony sues the **Dixie Chicks** for breach of contract. The country singers claim that Sony has been withholding their share of royalties, and their band is underpaid. **The Backstreet Boys** postpone their tour as member **AJ McLean** goes into rehab. **Metallica's James Hetfield** checks in as well, for "alcoholism and other addictions". **Janet Jackson** gets down and dirty with her new album, "All For You."

### August

NU 107's 2001 Best New Artists, **The Itchyworms!**, launch their debut album. **Mick Jagger** signs with Virgin to do his fourth solo album, "Goddess in the Doorway." **'N Sync** earns more royalty with the release of its fourth studio album, "Celebrity." First week's sales estimate is 1.88 million but it fails to beat the record of "No Strings Attached," 2.4 million units. Weezer bassist **Mikey Welsh** checks into a Boston psychiatric hospital. **Boyz II Men** leave their Universal Records nest and move to Arista Records. **Marilyn Manson**, ever the freak, is charged for masturbating in front of a 25-year-old security guard. Another suit was filed earlier for a similar incident in October of the previous year. **Aaliyah** dies in a plane crash after a video shoot in the Bahamas.

"WALK THIS WAY!" 'N Sync and Britney Spears share the stage with Aerosmith at the Superbowl halftime show.

### September

**The Beastie Boys'** Grand Royal record label closes shop, due to "mounting debts, decreasing assets, and exceedingly harsh industry conditions". The label has released albums such as **At The Drive-In's** "Relationship of Command," and is "home" to artists such as **Ben Lee, Sean Lennon** and **Luscious Jackson**. The first of two **Michael Jacskon** tribute concerts takes place in Madison Square Garden. The Sept. 11 incident shatters America and the rest of the world—prompting the cancellation of the Latin Grammy Awards, with the winners simply released to the press, and a slew of benefit concerts being held. **Catatonia** and boy band **Five** break up. The 2001 MTV Video Music Awards shows Britney wearing a snake and, well, that's about its only highlight along with **Alicia Keys'** heartbreaking performance... unless you count **Kid Rock** and **Pamela Anderson** dating a shocker. Jennifer Lopez weds her dancer.

### October

Eminem's divorce is finalized, while **Bob Dylan** announces he's about to write a multi-volume autobiography entitled "Chronicles." This month's breakup list includes Australian duo **Savage Garden** and **Elastica**. Guitarist **Wes Borland** leaves Limp Bizkit. The Family Values tour kicks off with Staind headlining. It includes **Stone Temple Pilots, Static-X, Deadsy** and **Linkin Park.**

### November/December

Michael Jackson stops traffic in Times Square for an in-store signing for his latest album, "Invincible". **George Harrison**, 58, dies of cancer. **Butch Vig** of **Garbage** drops out of a tour after coming down with Hepatitis A. Britney Spears does more girly action with her "I'm A Slave 4 U" video release. **No Doubt** releases its third album.

### Billboard's Top 10 Albums of the Year

1. "1," The Beatles
2. "Hotshot," Shaggy
3. "Black & Blue," The Backstreet Boys
4. "Now 5," Various Artists
5. "Chocolate Starfish and the Hot Dog Flavored Water," Limp Bizkit
6. "Hybrid Theory," Linkin Park
7. "Break the Cycle," Staind
8. "A Day Without Rain," Enya
9. "Celebrity," 'N Sync
10. "Country Grammar," Nelly

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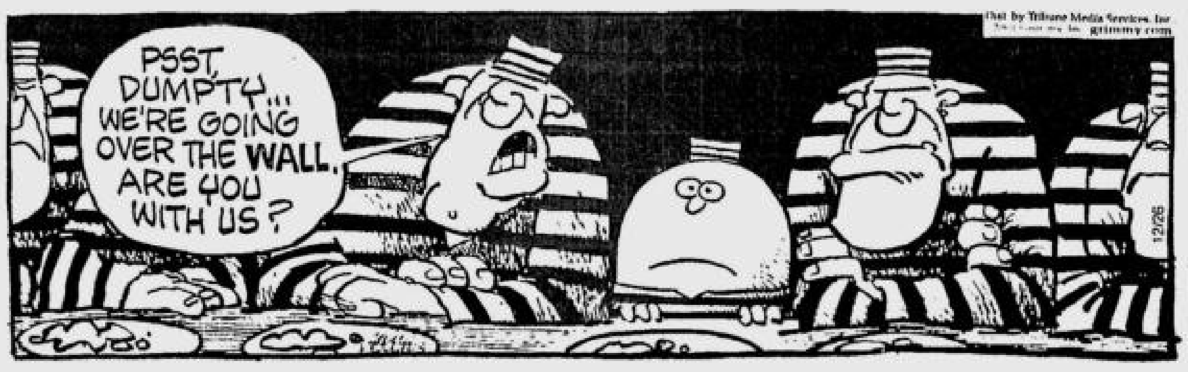
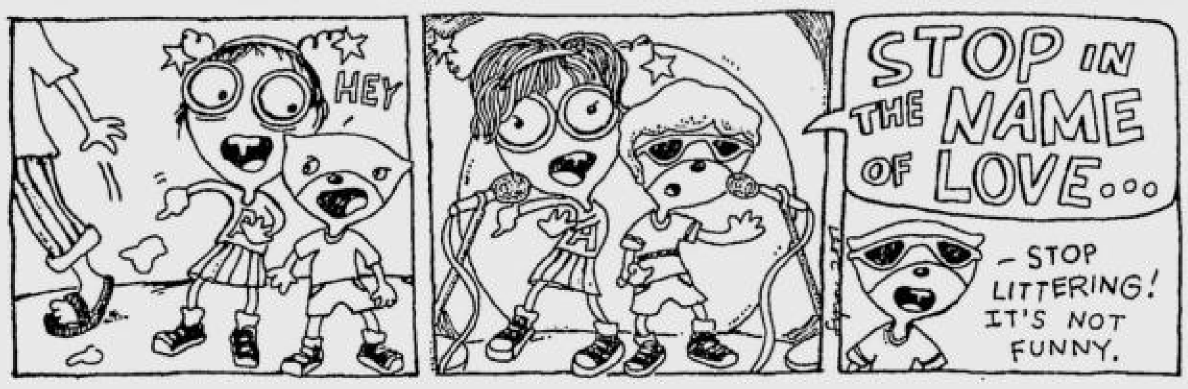
## MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


PSST, DUMPTY... WE'RE GOING OVER THE WALL. ARE YOU WITH US?
12/26

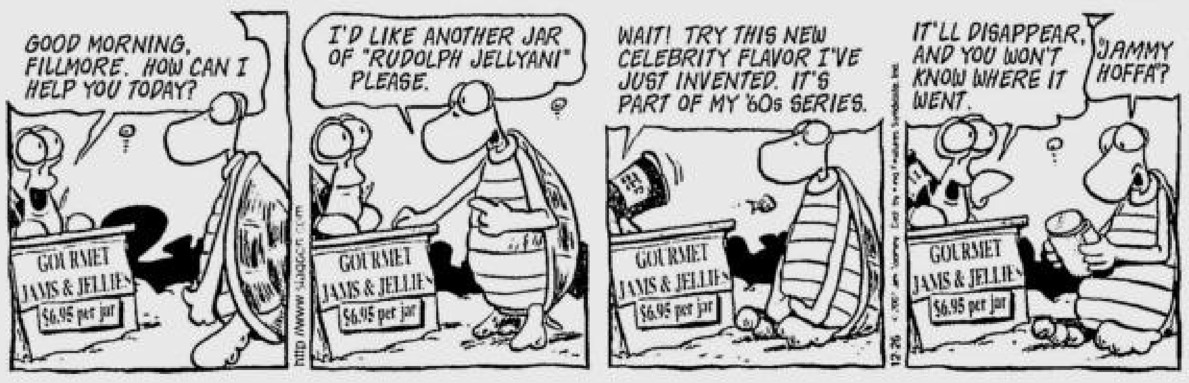
## ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY
STOP IN THE NAME OF LOVE...
– STOP LITTERING! IT'S NOT FUNNY.

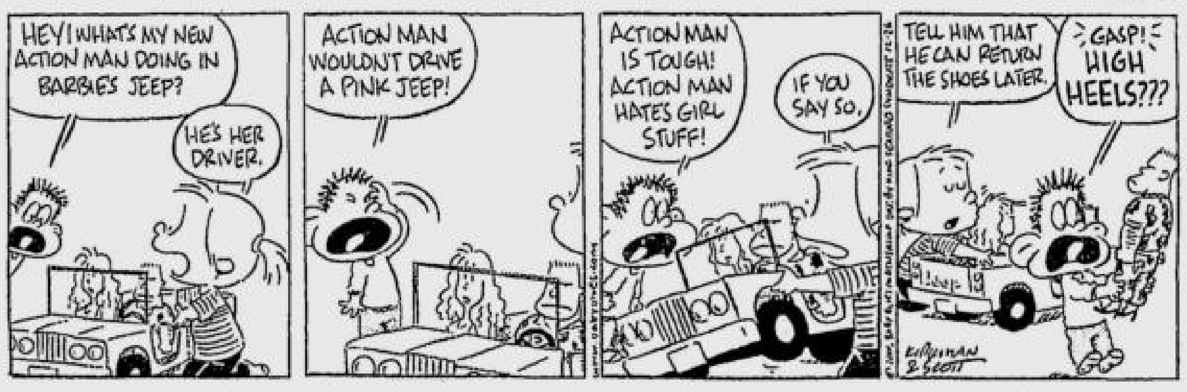
## SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


GOOD MORNING, FILLMORE. HOW CAN I HELP YOU TODAY?
I'D LIKE ANOTHER JAR OF "RUDOLPH JELLYANI" PLEASE.
WAIT! TRY THIS NEW CELEBRITY FLAVOR I'VE JUST INVENTED. IT'S PART OF MY '60s SERIES.
IT'LL DISAPPEAR, AND YOU WON'T KNOW WHERE IT WENT.
"JAMMY HOFFA"?
GOURMET JAMS & JELLIES $6.95 per jar

## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HEY! WHAT'S MY NEW ACTION MAN DOING IN BARBIE'S JEEP?
HE'S HER DRIVER.
ACTION MAN WOULDN'T DRIVE A PINK JEEP!
ACTION MAN IS TOUGH! ACTION MAN HATES GIRL STUFF!
IF YOU SAY SO.
TELL HIM THAT HE CAN RETURN THE SHOES LATER.
GASP! HIGH HEELS???
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

## HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Steve Allen, Alan King, Richard Widmark

**Happy Birthday:** You have the drive coupled with the knowledge to make your point heard and to get others to believe in what you are doing. Your clear-cut methods and your practical ideas are a winning combination. Your numbers are 12, 17, 24, 36, 42, 48

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Use your discipline to get back on track. Limit yourself when it comes to lavish entertainment. You need a few days to mellow out and relax.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** The main festivities may be over but that doesn't mean that you should be right back at it. Your family needs your tender loving care.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** You're ready to take on new projects. If you go onto the Internet you will discover information to get into a new hobby.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Take some time out for yourself. You always need a little time to rejuvenate after hectic family events. Moderation will be the key today.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Check out a new movie or just spend some time with good friends today. It won't hurt to leave some of the chores until later in the week.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** You have over-extended yourself in more ways than one. Relax with friends who may have some good ideas that will help you get back on track.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Set up equipment or new-fangled gadgets that you received from loved ones. Don't promise to do things for or with others. You will need some time to yourself today.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Make plans to have friends over for an entertaining evening. Good conversation with interesting people will lead to some great ideas for the New Year.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** You will be irritable and fed up with the whole party scene. Try to be pleasant and look forward to quieter days.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Spend time with someone you care deeply about. You need mental stimulation and a group atmosphere will not be conducive to an intimate encounter.

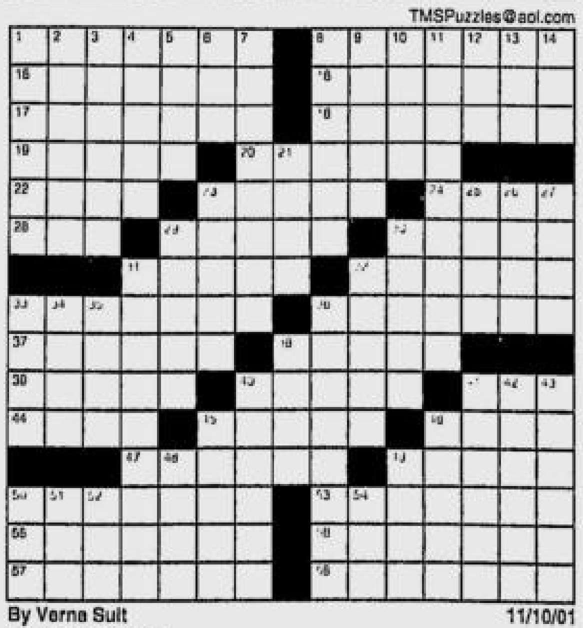
**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Spend time with a younger friend who looks up to you. You will be able to shed some insight into the projects that he or she is working on and feel helpful and good about yourself.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** You will be in the mood for romance or spending time with the people you love. This is not the time to put demands on yourself or others.

**Birthday Baby:** You are set in your ways and intent on following your own path. You are methodical, clever and insightful. When you set your mind on something you will be relentless until you reach your objective.

## DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Verna Suit
Silver Spring, MD

11/10/01

ACROSS

1 "Amadeus" star
6 Formfitting top
15 Swagger
16 __ de Saint-Exupery
17 Hispanic groceries
18 Belief in centralized government
19 Thickening agents
20 Old-fashioned and odd
22 Mutts
23 Subdue
24 Part of Q.E.D.
28 Absolutely!
29 Patchwork coverlet
30 Eat away at
31 Rather
32 Football team
33 Tall cactus
36 Highest mountain
37 Dahl or Golonka
38 Heroic stories
39 Dianne of "Hannah and Her Sisters"
40 Decree
41 Letters before AA?
44 Posted
45 Upright
46 Kind of jockey
47 Mad
49 Pearl collector
50 Evasive excuses
53 Natural simplicity
55 Marvel Comics man
56 All together
57 Disarranged
58 Got a whiff of

DOWN

1 Head monk's rights
2 Irish accent
3 Detection devices
4 States for the record
5 Crones
6 Nabokov book
7 Bloodsucking bug
8 Lava rock
9 Up to
10 Laurel or Kenton
11 Wobbly walkers
12 A majority of V
13 Letters in tennis?
14 "Man on the Moon" group
21 Ubangi feeder
23 Twentieth of a ream
25 Roam
26 Fruit drinks
27 Campsite sight
29 Mary of the miniskirt
30 Choose
31 Uncertainties
32 Dislodge?
33 Old sayings
34 Indy-winner Luyendyk
35 Welsh valley
36 Unisexual nouns
38 Idyllic spot
40 Rubbed out
41 Dispossess
42 African fly
43 Tiresome speech
45 Lauder of cosmetics
46 Backless sofa
48 __ and void
49 Thin coin
50 Kansas City hrs.
51 Ear: pref.
52 City near Bayonne
54 N. Mandela's party

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | E | A | P | ■ | S | C | A | N | ■ | C | L | U | B | S |
| E | R | L | E | ■ | K | A | T | E | ■ | H | A | N | O | I |
| F | I | F | T | E | E | N | T | H | L | E | T | T | E | R |
| S | C | A | R | F | P | I | N | ■ | A | S | H | O | R | E |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | R | T | S | ■ | R | I | T | E | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| T | A | I | P | E | I | ■ | K | A | N | E | ■ | A | C | E |
| S | T | O | R | M | C | E | N | T | E | R | ■ | L | A | G |
| A | S | T | O | ■ | ■ | X | E | S | ■ | ■ | E | T | N | A |
| R | E | A | ■ | T | Y | P | E | O | F | B | L | O | O | D |
| S | A | S | ■ | R | O | O | D | ■ | L | O | S | S | E | S |
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| P | L | A | T | T | E | ■ | F | I | X | A | T | I | V | E |
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| S | L | O | A | N | ■ | R | U | E | R | ■ | P | O | N | D |
| T | E | S | T | S | ■ | O | L | D | S | ■ | O | R | T | S |

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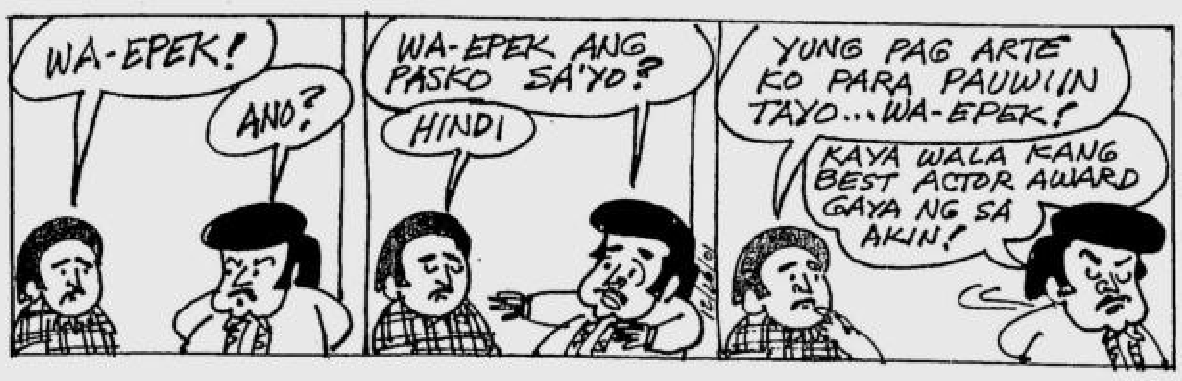
11/10/01

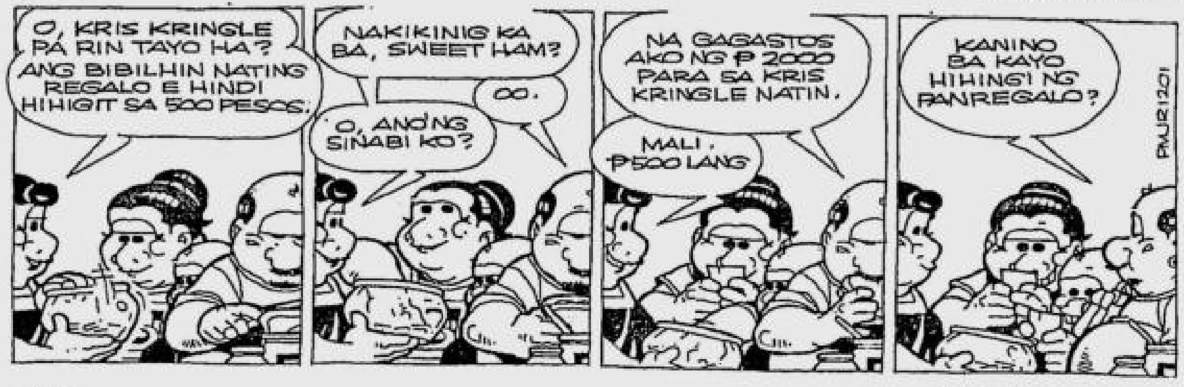
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WA-EPEK!
ANO?
WA-EPEK ANG PASKO SA'YO?
HINDI
YUNG PAG ARTE KO PARA PAUWIIN TAYO...WA-EPEK!
KAYA WALA KANG BEST ACTOR AWARD GAYA NG SA AKIN!

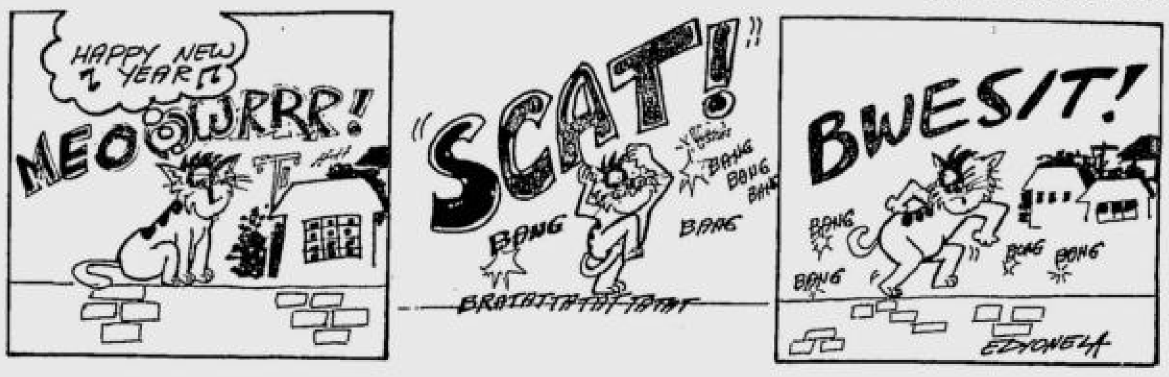
## PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


O, KRIS KRINGLE PA RIN TAYO HA? ANG BIBILHIN NATING REGALO E HINDI HIHIGIT SA 500 PESOS.
NAKIKINIG KA BA, SWEET HAM?
OO.
O, ANO'NG SINABI KO?
NA GAGASTOS AKO NG ₱ 2000 PARA SA KRIS KRINGLE NATIN.
MALI. ₱500 LANG
KANINO BA KAYO HIHINGI NG PANREGALO?
PMJR1201

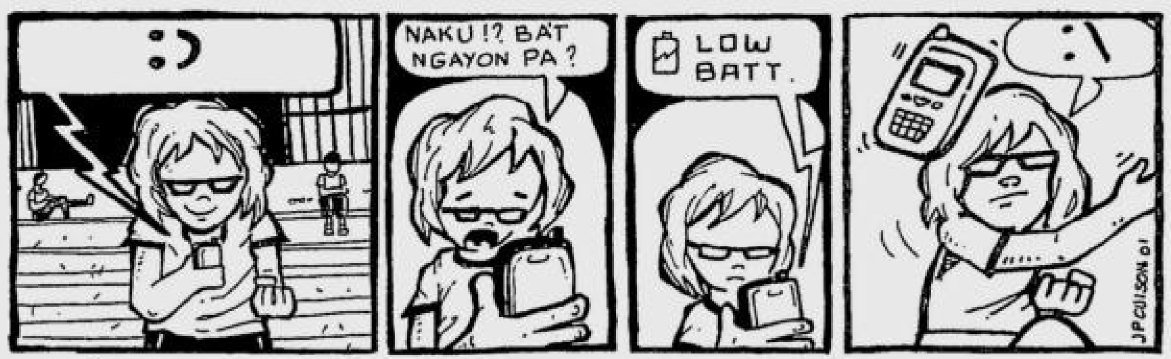
## SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


HAPPY NEW YEAR
MEOOWRRR!
SCAT!
BANG
BANG BANG
BRATATTATAT TATAT
BWESIT!
EDIONELA

## GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


:)
NAKU!? BAT NGAYON PA?
LOW BATT.
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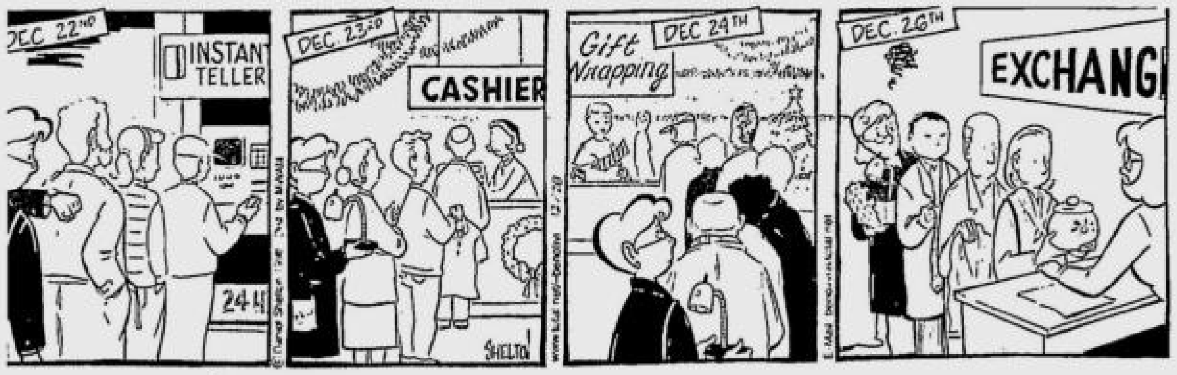
JPCUISON 01

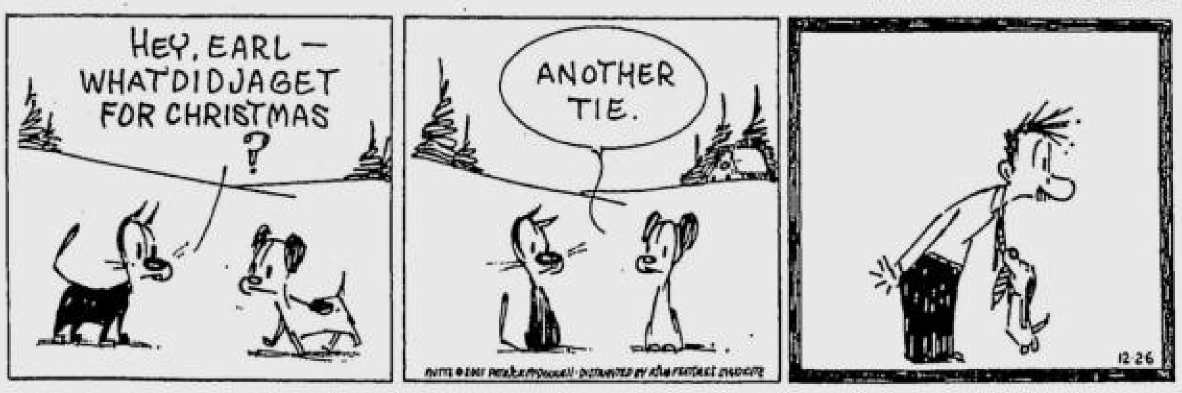
## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DEC 22ND
INSTANT TELLER
24 H
DEC. 23RD
CASHIER
Gift Wrapping
DEC 24TH
DEC. 26TH
EXCHANG
SHELTON

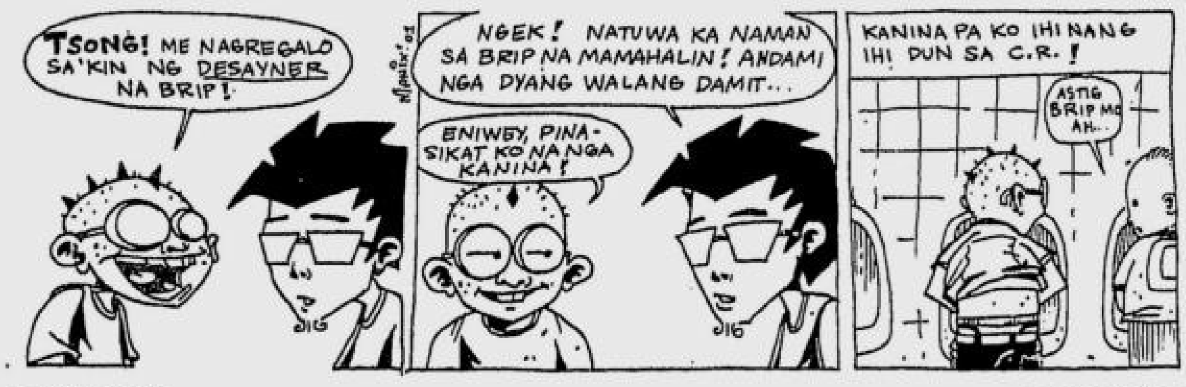
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, EARL – WHATDIDJAGET FOR CHRISTMAS?
ANOTHER TIE.
12-26

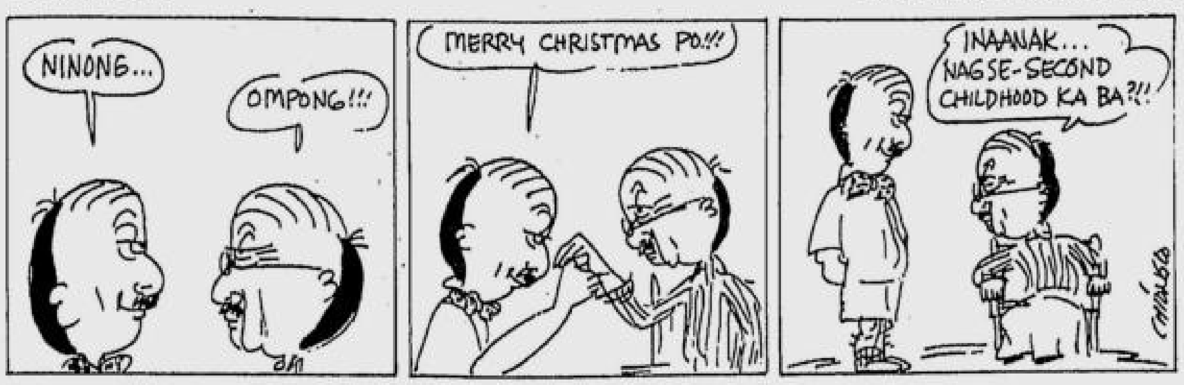
## KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX


TSONG! ME NAGREGALO SA'KIN NG DESAYNER NA BRIP!
NGEK! NATUWA KA NAMAN SA BRIP NA MAMAHALIN! ANDAMI NGA DYANG WALANG DAMIT...
ENIWEY, PINASIKAT KO NA NGA KANINA!
KANINA PA KO IHI NANG IHI DUN SA C.R.!
ASTIG BRIP MO AH..

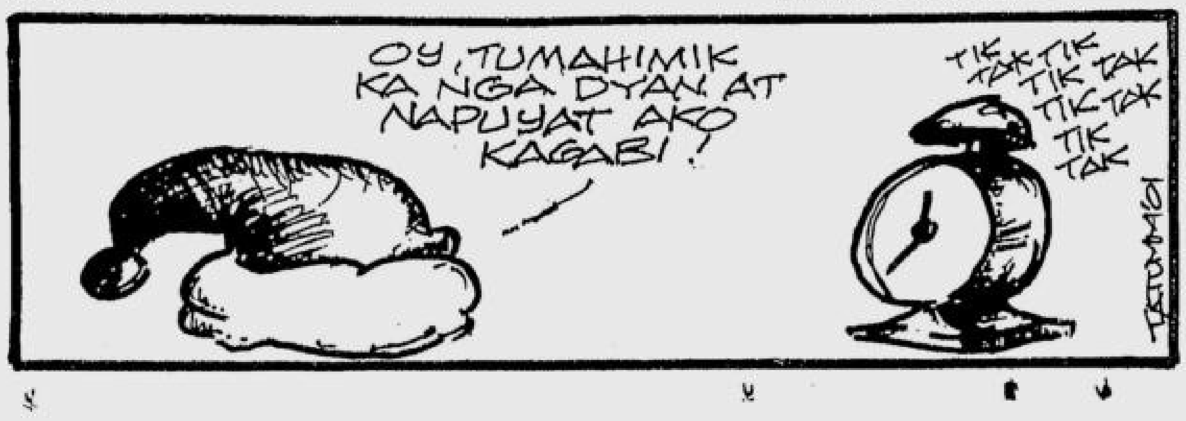
## LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NINONG...
OMPONG!!!
MERRY CHRISTMAS PO!!!
INAANAK... NAGSE-SECOND CHILDHOOD KA BA?!!
CHIONGLO

## TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, TUMAHIMIK KA NGA DYAN AT NAPUYAT AKO KAGABI!
TIK TAK TIK TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK

# SMASH HITS AND DUDS IN CONSUMER TECH IN 2001

(From page C2)

## Game consoles

Microsoft's XBox, Sony's PlaySstation, Nintendo's GameCube and Sega's Dreamcast.

Bill Gates may not be the most well-liked person on Earth, but one thing's for sure, he knows a good opportunity when he sees it. Years ago, when everyone was focused on how computing was changing business, he reportedly said that in the future games would be where it's at. (Of course, he also said before that 64k was "All the RAM that one would ever need.")

In late 2001 and with the United States battle-scarred and in recession, news stories suggest that the only ones making money are the game manufacturers. Sega, with its Dreamcast, started it all with its $10 games and Internet connectivity, but Sony's PS2 has overtaken it. The PS2 can play DVDs, but the real story is its ability to play old PS1 games, making it a practical choice for the budget-conscious parent who wants to get the most bang for the buck.

Nintendo's GameCube and Gate's Xbox especially are not simply relying on looks to get into the fray. Add a killer game to the Xbox's 733mHz processor and 8Mb hard drive, and things can change pretty fast. Already interesting this year, the two will definitely be worth watching next year.

## Piracy

I know it's always been easy to get pirated software, movie and audio compact discs, but this year I think the situation just became plain ridiculous. For P220, I got a "Starbucks" compilation containing limited edition Astrud G. and Sting tracks in an MRT station. A compendium of alternative rock hits includes tracks from Soul Asylum, Green Day, Cake and RadioHead. A third purchase, with a P20 discount, gets me an MP3 with five complete albums from Lenny Kravitz, FatBoy Slim, Rage Against the Machine, the band with Fred Durst in it and Macy Gray. Yes, the smooth-silky timber of Macy's voice beckoned me as it resonated in a "Sony" P2,000 VCD-CD player for a fifth of the original price.

At the 4th floor of a nearby mall, I can pursue my education in the fine art of Web design by purchasing, for the whopping price of P120, a complete set of Microsoft's Visual Studio 2k, Visual Basic 6.0, Visual C++, Foxpro, Interdev and an assortment of add-ons and components. All this at the substantial savings of, oh, around P70,000 or thereabouts with other programming tools and a tutorial e-book to boot. And if the saleslady likes the quality of our banter, I might even get a discount on a pearl shake at the stall next door.

It's easy to say piracy is a necessary evil in our shores. After all, how can we have ever reached our lofty status as a source of world-class software developers if it weren't for the bootleg software back in college? But there has got to be a limit. I once saw someone purchasing Barbie's Cradle's latest album like he was buying menthol candy from a streethawker. It got me thinking. Yes, you bootlegged Barbie. But where is the soul in that?

## Viruses—NIMDA, Sircam, Code Red, Denial of Service (DOS) Attacks

Granted, the "I Love You" bug was still the most damaging ever, but that virus was not a brilliant design by a long shot. A dead-giveaway was the apparent skill, or lack of it, of its now infamous developer. Its spread resulted mainly from its title. Imagine suddenly receiving an e-mail from a colleague with the subject: "I Love You." How can you resist?

COMPAQ
Ipaq

The viruses of 2001, however, are another story. You got viruses that spawned other viruses. Just when your antivirus software thinks it's done its job, the virus transforms into something else. You've got viruses that found

SMASH / p.C7

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# Global Beauty

L'Oreal beauty bar

Glorietta mall was the ideal setting for **L'Oreal Philippines** first ever **Global Beauty** event. Catering to diverse markets, both L'Oreal and Glorietta had something to offer consumers from all walks of life including designer fragrances and European clothing for fashionistas to affordable home hair color and home accessories for housewives.

L'Oreal Philippines showcased some of its top selling signatures in this beauty glamorama. The month-long event began with a stopover in New York, the capital of urban chic and home to all-American beauty leaders like Maybelline cosmetics and Ralph Lauren fragrance. Next stop on the itinerary: Paris, a city renowned for hip elegance and sophisticated beauty. Consumers were invited to sample services by Paris-trained beauty experts from L'Oreal Paris, Kerastase and Garnier. The third port of call was Milan where classic Italian simplicity was interpreted into the latest modern luxe looks. The last stop was Asia, here L'Oreal Professionel brought together the Philippines' best with the 2001 Color Trophy winners and finalists to treat customers to an all-out color filled beauty extravaganza of fragrance, skin care, hair color, make-up, and hair styling possibilities.

## Working beauty

At L'Oreal, we realize that for a brand to succeed it needs to be innovative, effective, and cosmetic. Best-selling products succeed because they make you look and feel good. After all who can call slathering on a heavy coat face cream that smells like old socks a pampering experience? Or worse, apply a lipstick that feels and tastes like day-old wax? Creating the best beauty products has always been L'Oreal's mission. It is significant to note that L'Oreal spends more than double on research than that of any beauty company in the world. In 2000 alone, L'Oreal Group registered over 400 patents and this translated into 32 innovative product launches for L'Oreal Philippines in 2001 alone! So trust L'Oreal to come up with something to tempt even the most jaded beauty junkie. From the best mascara in the market to the ideal answer to all your skin care needs, count on L'Oreal to be at your service.

So if you missed out on this year's Global Beauty at Glorietta "no worries" L'Oreal will always have something brewing up its sleeve to tempt the diva, the princess, the rock star, and the girl-next-door in all of us.

Maybelline Mascara – a makeup must have.

GREAT LASH
GREAT LASH

Maybelline Express Finish for the girl on the go.

EXPRESS MAKEUP

Perfect skin starts with Hydrafresh

L'OREAL
HYDRAFRESH

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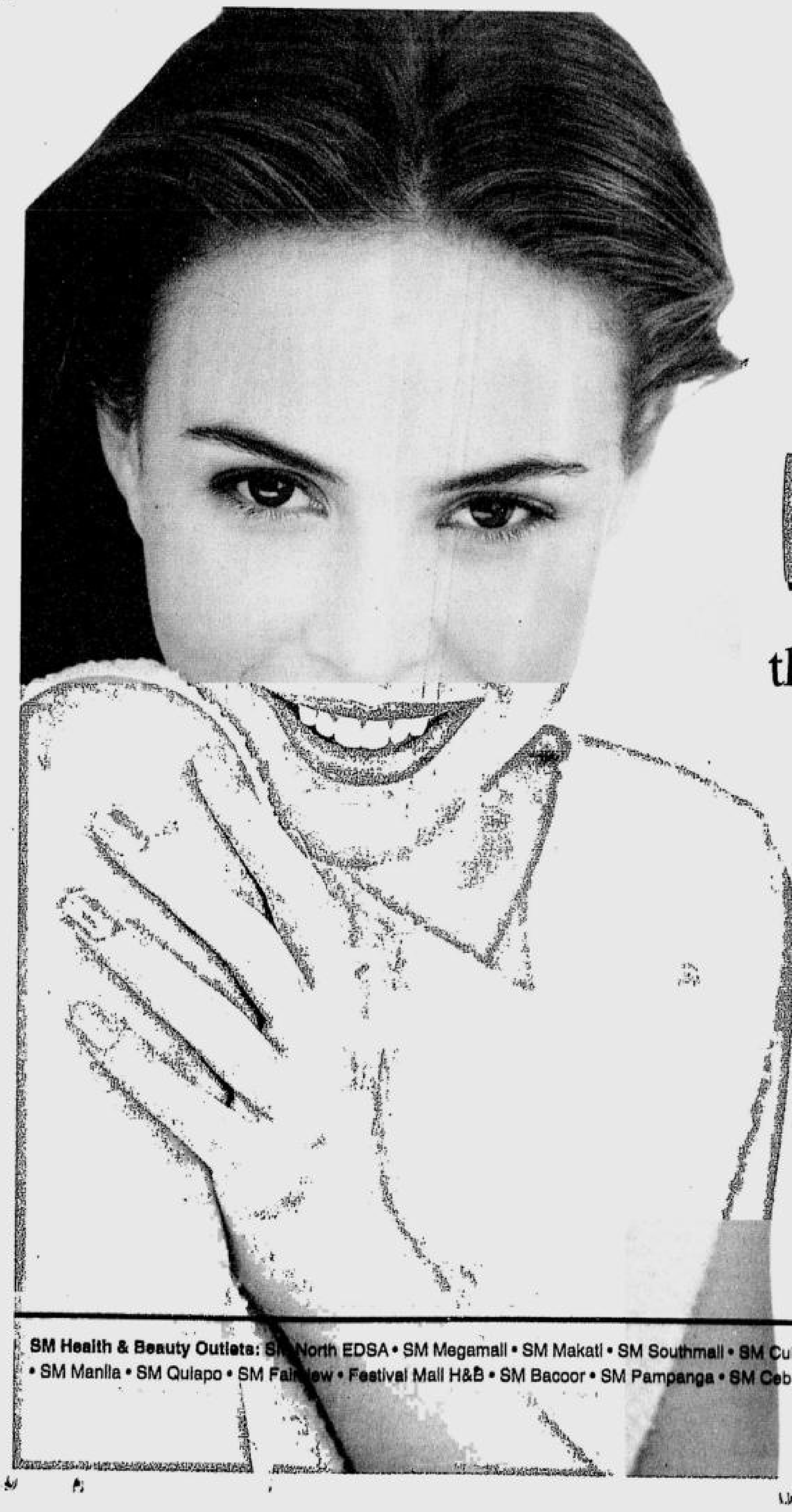


Health H&B Beauty

presents

MAYBELLINE

Festive Finds

the biggest Maybelline sale of the year

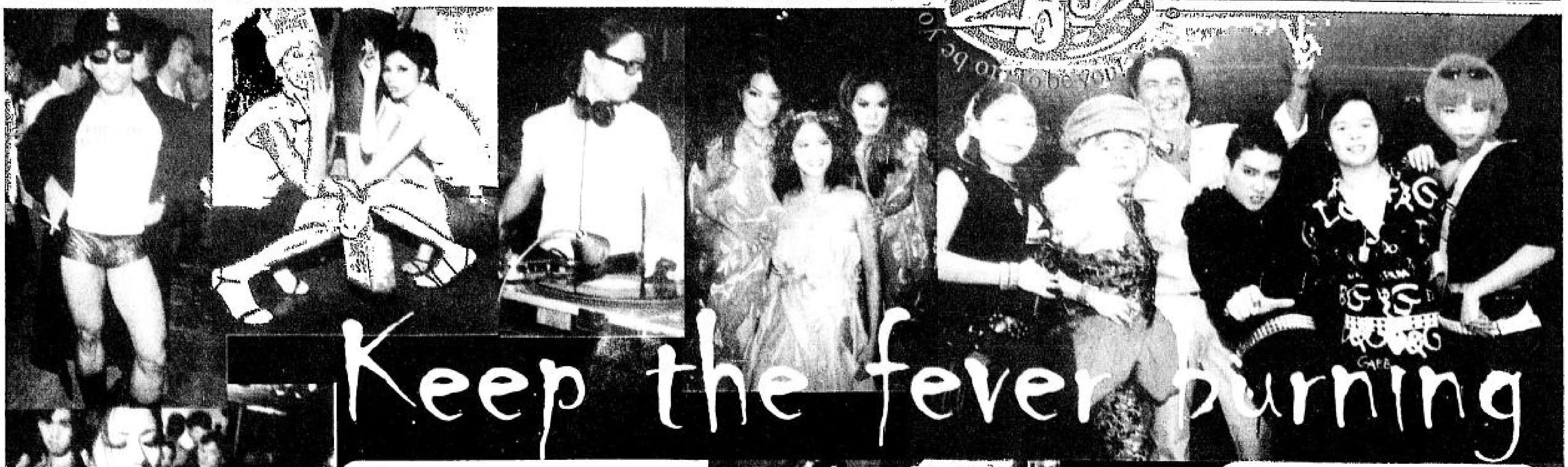
40%OFF

at all SM Health & Beauty outlets
from December 26 to 31, 2001.

MAYBELLINE
NEW YORK

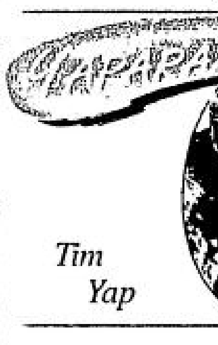
**SM Health & Beauty Outlets:** SM North EDSA • SM Megamall • SM Makati • SM Southmall • SM Cubao • SM Harrison Plaza • SM Centerpoint • SM Manila • SM Quiapo • SM Fairview • Festival Mall H&B • SM Bacoor • SM Pampanga • SM Cebu • SM Iloilo • SM Mandurlao • SM Davao

PER DOH-BFAD PERMIT NO. 0997, S.2001



# Keep the fever burning

Partyphiles did not go gentle into the good night. Amid the pall of gloom and doom, they partied on—and showed that the best antidote to bad times is having a good time



Tim Yap

I CAN'T help but wax nostalgic as 2001 comes to a close. I hear too many people say, "It has been a bad year, I can't wait till it's over," but I choose to look at the other side. By the end of each year, we ask ourselves, "What did it all mean? What important lessons did I learn?" The year 2001 has been a year of various changes, of openness to transition, and in the final analysis, of growth.

For nocturnal society at least, it was marked by several closings and openings, chill spots, new party areas around the metropolis, and niched theme nights at bars and clubs. Variety became the spice of club life.

The early part of the year started on an edgy note, what with the political upheavals and text avalanches to topple the old establishment. Even in those times, partymeisters exerted effort to uplift the scene—to no avail. It just didn't feel right. Political priorities came first. The weakest link had no choice but to say goodbye.

The "out with the old, in with the new" stance couldn't have come at a better time. The city's partyphiles were getting tired of the same old stuff on the techno front. Urbanites either went "cocooning" in their own homes or went out of town on weekends to avoid the hoi polloi of weekend fun.

In came "chill," proving to punters that there was more to life than pill popping, parading and glow-stick swirling. After recent years of fast-paced, hardcore bass pumping and sensory overload, it made sense to take things a wee bit slower, to relax and recharge one's batteries. Chill gave partyphiles what they couldn't do while feeling each other's vibes on the dance floor—talk.

## Talk year

This year, there was that need to communicate. Enough of seeing each other in varying degrees of intoxication. "I want to get to know you, now" became the more urgent need. It was a logical move since city files had always complained that "Manila is too small," or "it has no real dating and party scene," or "everybody is young"—not really a bad thing if you ask me.

Wasabi made phenomenal waves, with Anton Ramos chilling us softly with his tasteful tunes, conducive to conversation and candid moments. Soon, the halls of the Japanese *sake* and wine bar became yuppiefied, wall to wall. The Rockwell strip of al fresco bars exuded this vibe, while Pravda had its own, albeit more dancey, version on Thursdays, and so did Wherelse, with its Oasis Fridays getting the hipsters stamp of approval.

Elsewhere, new revelry areas sprouted around the city. Libis, with its rows of restaurants, bars and clubs stretching to the boundaries of C-5, blossomed into a party central with the combined forces of Pier One, Cactus and Twilo. It was strengthened with the opening of Po Na Na. "This is life!" said QC's partyphiles in unison. Their Makati and Malate siblings would drop by frequently to look for what was brewing on the strip. Later, Eastwood City would open yet with another cluster of bars and hotspots—Blue Onion, Amoeba, Celadon, among others, to satisfy the thirst of this growing market.

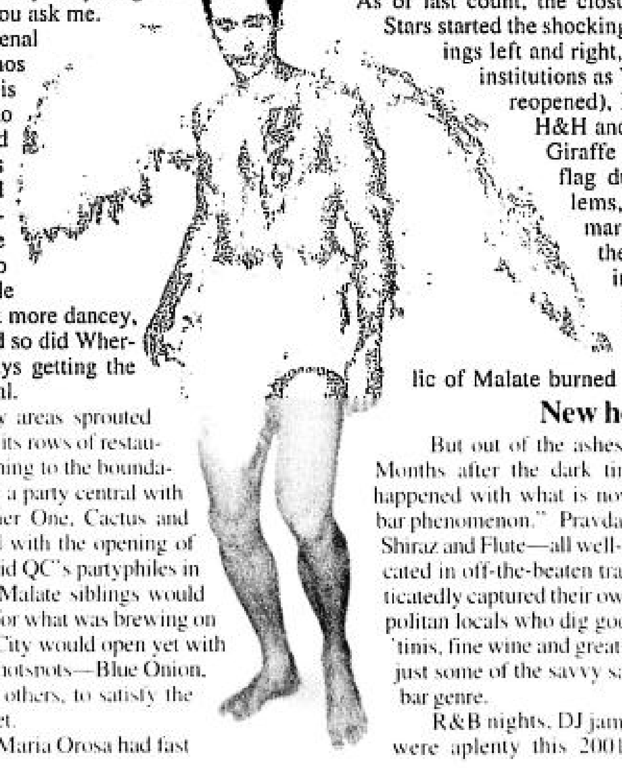
Meanwhile in Manila, Maria Orosa had fast taken over sleeping sister J. Nakpil, after the former hip street was invaded with all sorts of tacky turns. Hot spots like restos Sala, Casa Armas, Episode, Bravo, People's Palace and fab finds store Firma remain on Nakpil Street, and so does Insomnia, but the general feel has changed.

## Alternative street

Orosa, on the other hand, injected a new life with the introduction of gay-owned hip spots Raj, Fidel (this season's fab find of a bar), kinky store Pride Xchange, Komiks bar and others. Regulars like Joy (for men who like men), new kid on the block La Dida (for women who like women) and company make Orosa the gay street of the moment.

A book, "Malate," was launched this year by Larry Cruz and friends to document the growth of the scene on this bohemian side of Manila from Adriatico to Remedios.

Still, many feel that the scene this year suffered some heavy beating. "I haven't been out for a long time!" was a standard opening line for once hard core partygoers—and with good reason. Either a new generation is taking over, or a lot of them feel displaced after several venues, each with a definitive niche, closed down.



As of last count, the closures totaled eight. Stars started the shocking trend of bar closings left and right, followed by such institutions as Verve Room (now reopened), Kemistry, Matina, H&H and Sambo's. When Giraffe put out the white flag due to labor problems, one noticed the marked difference in the scene when driving by a, dark and lonely 6750 alley late at night. Just recently Republic of Malate burned down.

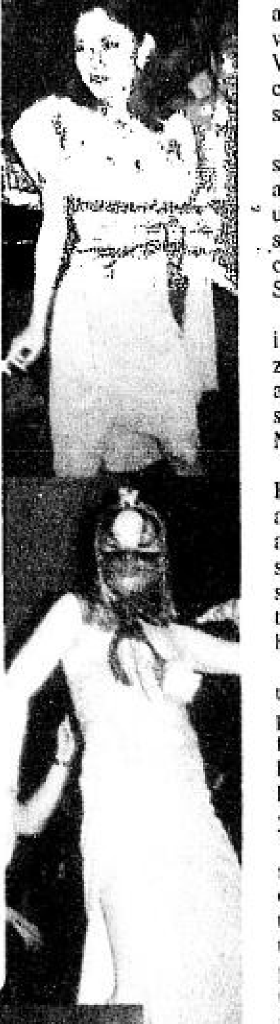
## New hope

But out of the ashes sprang new hope. Months after the dark times, a renaissance happened with what is now called the "wine bar phenomenon." Pravda (formerly Beluga), Shiraz and Flute—all well-designed venues located in off-the-beaten track streets—sophisticatedly captured their own market of cosmopolitan locals who dig good food, sumptuous 'tinis, fine wine and great company. They are just some of the savvy samples of the wine-bar genre.

R&B nights, DJ jams and theme nights were aplenty this 2001, with in-demand DJs doing club rotations around the city's bars and clubs. Big "raves" didn't pack in as much this year (save for late 2001's Paul Van Dyk hit by NBK), so these DJs settled for residencies and have regular nights, giving clubgoers the same party energy in a more intimate setting. This explains the success of 78 Orange, now on its second year in the club circuit.

Retro still had a presence on the club scene, with Venezia leading the pack with its "Stargazing @ Louie Y's" series of parties. Again, as with any other good idea, others followed. First-time DJs got space every Thursdays at Orange, while poetry reading nights were held at Sanctum in Intramuros.

Personally, I got to throw a couple of parties I was really proud of and I got closer to the people I love—my friends and my family! How's that for an achievement?



## Top 10 uppers

Below are the top 10 events of the year, in no particular order:

**1. Linea Italia's "Fashion Revolution."** Rebellion never had it this good, as hard-edged military gear clashed with red-hot [illegible]k. Fashionistas of all shapes, sizes and backgrounds met and matched for the P100,000 Linea GC prize! Attack!

**2. NBK's Paul Van Dyk.** Not [illegible] the traffic and the remote venue (Casino [illegible] Amphitheater) could stop partyphiles from having a grand time at this top international DJ's Manila jaunt. Hands down, the dance event of the year.

**3. Absolut Mandarin launch.** With a giant Absolut-shaped bottle made with real oranges as centerpiece, this midsummer night's wet dream started on the right citrus tone. With hydraulics of flying fairies, other mystical creatures and a thousand and one vodka shots, this event was one for the magical books!

**4. Bench "Pinoy Pop" book launch.** Constantly redefining Pinoy culture, Bench once again scored a big hit with this event, with the unforgettable flying fight scenes of Darna versus Valentina, the giant mascots of Kenkoy and other characters, plus the performances from Sylvia La Torre, et al. Mabuhay, "Pinoy Pop"!

**5. Mega Fashion Awards.** Inspiring. That in one word was how it felt when Mega Magazine acknowledged the best in fashion. It was an unprecedented gathering of movers and shakers, young and old—all lovers of fashion. May it be an annual event.

**6. Ayala's "Witches and Wizards Ball."** Harry Potter was the star of this magical ball attended by young society in full costumed attendance! Warp and Milkwear fashion shows after, a parade within the audience ensued, with the most flamboyant one winning a trip to Paris, no less. Even Voldemort would have loved to attend.

**7. Sambo's "Foam" party.** Pre-closing era, this frothy celebration had Manila's partyphiles throwing all caution to the wind, er foam. Picture this—one giant party, about a hundred great looking, zero-inhibition half-naked punters, wild fun and white foam! Can you beat that?

**8. "Pajama Jam @ Wherelse."** An extension of Marcel Crespo's Oasis chill nights, only this time instead of tents, he used beds—tons of them. Seeing all the beds inside the tight Wherelse dance floor and the beautiful people, intimate in sexy lingerie and seductive undergarments, one got a different meaning of the term "get laid."

**9. The 17th Philippine Advertising Congress.** Thousands of delegates from advertising and the arts, and students, all under one roof, hopping from one "millionnaire" contest to the other, collectively screaming to grab a kiss and photo op with the The Hunks, and going out nightly to all of Cebu's party spots. *"Manong, ang sarap talaga ng balls!"*

**10. Edsa II shebang.** Count on the Pinoy youth, peaceful and fun-loving people that we are, to make a party out of a political uprising. Everybody who was anybody was there, one people, one voice, one nation.

These events and more made 2001 the year of spellbinding breakthroughs and turning points, showing the resilience and unwavering sense of fun of the youth spirit. We pray that the same resilience and sense of fun characterize the year that now knocks at our door. Have a great 2002, partyphiles. Burn, baby. BURN.

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

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# How to enjoy flawless skin

MakeOver

Kinny Salas

**IN BETWEEN MY menstrual cycle, I achieve smooth skin from thorough scrubbing and medication. Is there a way I can prevent my skin from breaking out before my period so I can enjoy flawless skin longer? Please recommend products I can buy here because I don't have relatives coming home from the United States and even if I did, the exchange rate is just crazy.**

**FRUSTRATED FIFI**

Start the pimple prevention ritual a week before your period. If you have no idea when you are going to get it, take note of the first day of your last period. Say, if you got it on a Thursday, count four Thursdays after that and encircle that date. You will get it, give or take, around then. The Thursday before that, start your deep-cleansing methods.

I suggest a salicylic liquid cleanser or shower gel for the back and chest only as these are the only parts that have oil glands and break out prone. To use on other parts of the body would be wasteful. Apply with a body puff or sponge and work in a rich lather and leave on for 30 seconds. We don't have Neutrogena and Oxy here but one that's available is Clean and Clean Facial Wash. Tea Tree Oil shower gel from The Body Shop helps, too. The back and chest have thicker skin and bigger oil glands so what you use on them may be too strong for the delicate area of your face.

Use alpha hydroxy cleansers for the face to clear out pores so nothing can clog them. Limit your moisturizers for the evenings only because oil production at this time is more active. If you must use moisturizer for day, switch to a serum so it won't clog pores. Continue this regimen until your period is finished and you will have problem-free skin or at least a more controlled one. Go back to your old routine after or you might abuse the skin and make it too dry and sensitive. This is not good because too dry skin is prone to scratches and rashes.

* * *

***Tawas* has improved the fairness and odor of my underarms but it doesn't keep me dry and it is so itchy. Is there a way to tone down the itching?**

**ITCHY IANNA**

Stop using it! It sounds very much like you have an allergic reaction to *tawas*. I am afraid you will have to go back to using a sensitive-skin deodorant/antiperspirant. Try Dove or Fa Sensitive deodorant stick. I have no complaints about dark underarm occurrences with these products and they do the odor and sweat-blocking jobs.

* * *

What's new with hair? Bold red streaks! Red is not only coming out in accessories like shoes, bags, dresses and lipsticks but also in hair. It is not a full color thing but its look ranges from skinny ribbon highlights to bold chunky streaks. The concentration is the area framing the face. It's like the skunk stripe made famous by Audrey Hepburn in "Breakfast at Tiffany's" but in red. We are not talking auburn or strawberry but red, red, red!

If you want red streaks strategically put, call these numbers for inquiries: 893-4098 (Gigi did my hair) or 898-2222 (Joseph did mine). If you prefer the bold, chunky streaks you can do yourself, a good product is L'Oreal Excellance in Red. If you do it now you won't have to retouch for Christmas to New Year.

# SMASH HITS AND DUDS IN CONSUMER TECH IN 2001

(From page C5)

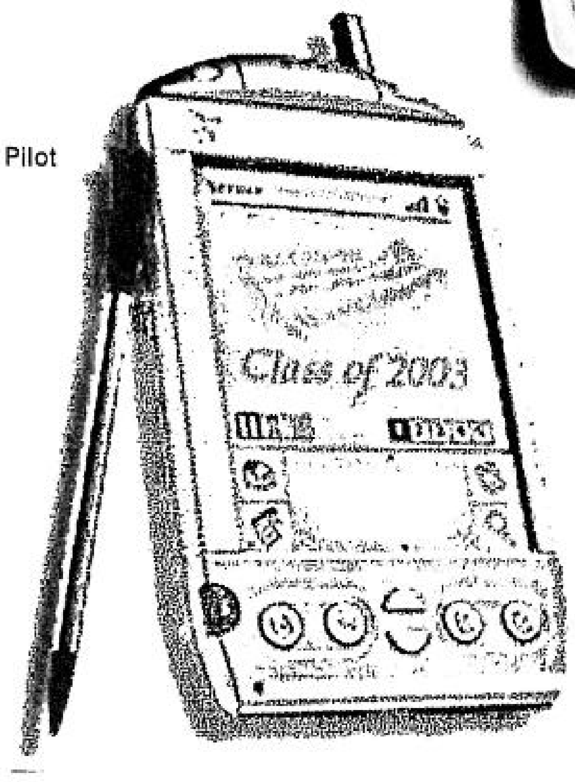
holes in your system where none existed (or at least that's what the operating system's manufacturer said).

And if that's not scary enough, 2001 saw viruses that didn't attack the personal computer, but went for servers. What better way to spread itself over the Internet than by using servers? These instances, although few, called attention to just how fragile this "platform of the new economy," the Internet, can be.

## 3G, WAP, Bluetooth, GPRS and other things that went pffft

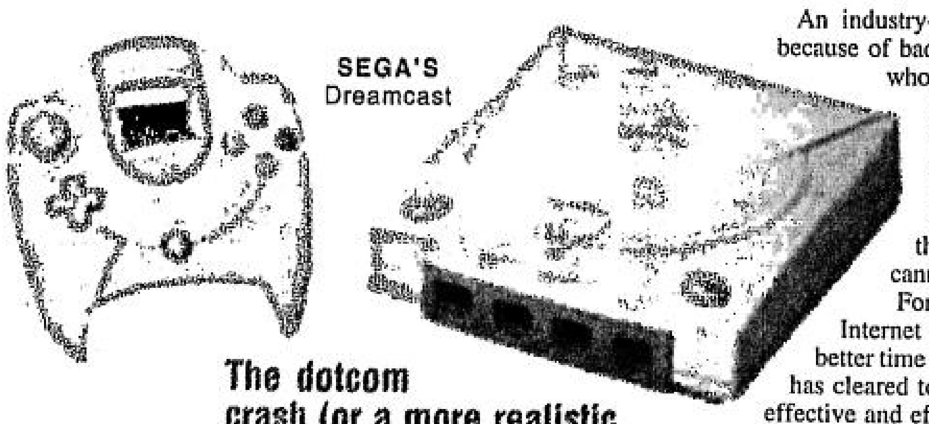
When manufacturers decide to put their heads and money together to hype something up, they don't fool around. 3G, WAP, Bluetooth and, to some extent, GPRS were promoted so heavily that almost every developer was in a panic to learn these new "technologies" to ensure employment. But much like a broth with too many chefs, most of the developments never got into the hands of the consumers, at least not this year.

CASSIOPEIA


PALM Pilot

3G is a mystery. It is always reported as being "deployed" or "adopted" somewhere, but never around here. Bluetooth is gradually disappearing from the horizon, GPRS has been at the "testing"' stage for a while now, pending a realistic way to compute charges for it. WAP? The predictions were right. It is crap. It would have been interesting to see if Filipinos would take to NTT Docomo's i-Mode, given it's fantastic popularity in Japan, but it never got farther than a few press statements.

The only thing that did make some headway was 802.11b or the wireless network which, frankly, was a rather oldish technology. Most network devices were ready to implement it even in the '90s. But after all is said and done, it's just another way of wiring up a local network, only this time without cables. For what it's worth, it did manage to stir up some excitement, if only for a little while.


SEGA'S Dreamcast

## The dotcom crash (or a more realistic approach to the Net)

Anything that says "crash" must be gloomy, right? Well, yes and no. For while a lot of money was lost in this year's crash but to me it is a sign of better things to come, especially for those who know what they were doing.

An industry-wide downfall doesn't happen because of bad luck. It happens because those who lost their shirts never had a good foundation to begin with. Like the proverbial structure built on shaky ground, a disaster is waiting to happen to those who never had a clear grasp of the technology from the very start and what it can and cannot do.

For the ones that really do know the Internet and how to use it, there is no better time than now to strike. Finally the air has cleared to show what is simply the most effective and efficient medium ever made—the Internet.

Finally, the Internet is no longer in the hands of the fast-talking salesman. It is now with the realistic and connectivity-aware entrepreneur. The future never looked so bright.

*E-mail the author at gary@exchange.ph*

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# Blast hits malls

It was the meteor that licked all the dinosaurs in the Ice Age.

Yesterday was the day other prepaid Internet cards dreaded. With Blast (spelled as Bl@st, but pronounced as blast) finally landing on the country's major malls and cybercafes, competition is left with a gigantic crater on their craniums to contend with.

Powered by SkyInternet with 7,000 dedicated lines and up to 56k, only Blast can have the muscle over the claim "once you get connected, you stay connected". This superior service simply cannot be matched by competition that mostly rely on other Internet service providers (ISP's) and not have their own network.

Unreliable service and slow connectivity are the most common gripes of prepaid Internet card users in the country who have flocked to cybercafes to either hook up with a babe, say sweet acronyms to their significant others, bash misunderstood people who may not deserve such a bashing or unabated weirdos who deserve to be trashed, search for a nice resort to retreat to this summer, observe silently in chatrooms like a polite pervert, or just play a plain good 'ol round of Counter-strike.

"I've almost given up surfing, totally disillusioned, depraved and deprived by other Internet prepaid cards where you can never ever get a connection from. Among these dupers, @!$#5%&*, Blast's competition, is forgivable. At least they can guarantee connection before your 100th try." Peter Picker sarcastically commented while on queue, patiently waiting for his turn to surf with his Blast card in one of the cybercafes in our country's major malls.

Beyond reliability, Blast prepaid Internet card is mind-blowingly affordable. For only a hundred apiece, one is assured of 9 hours of straight surfing in cyberspace. Isn't that just fly?

Meanwhile, Counter-strikers have been rallying co-Counter-strikers to picket at the country's cybercafes nationwide. Since more surfers have flocked to cybercafes, Counter-strikers have been displaced from their usual camps.

Apparently, since Blast came along, what used to be their town is now riddled with a population of prepaid Internet card users with a renewed faith in the service.

Merely months in the market, Blast prepaid Internet card has sold out their first wave of stocks and have already exceeded purchase order projections and sales quotas enough to cover up for 18 months bonus next year.

"We're just happy to bring the people of cyberland the service they deserve and the reliable connection they crave for", squawks one of the "square" guys from the Blast team.

Asked on why Blast is spelled as Bl@st but pronounced as Blast, the same square dude had only this to say, his fore-finger vertically slicing his lips in half "sssshhhhhhhsssssshhhhh, it's a secret".

Until now, it remains an enigma why Blast is spelled as Bl@st. In fact, it is a mystery so deep that Blast Management is actually contemplating on creating a contest for assumptions on why Blast is spelled as Bl@st for both research and sales purposes.

Asked for the nth time, why, you-know-what is spelled as-you-know-what but pronounced as you-know-what, the marketing team however, consistently refuses to unravel the answer like the Sphinx would its riddles.

As Blast hits more cybercafes and malls, expect more thunderous complaints from competition and their disgruntled patrons who have discarded them for the SkyInternet powered pre-paid Internet card. (ADVT.)

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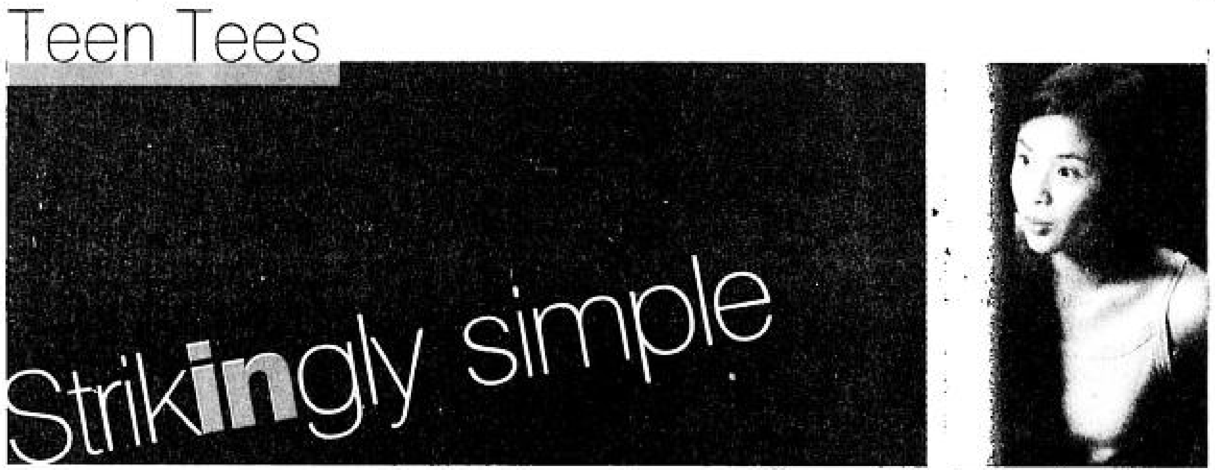
Teen Tees



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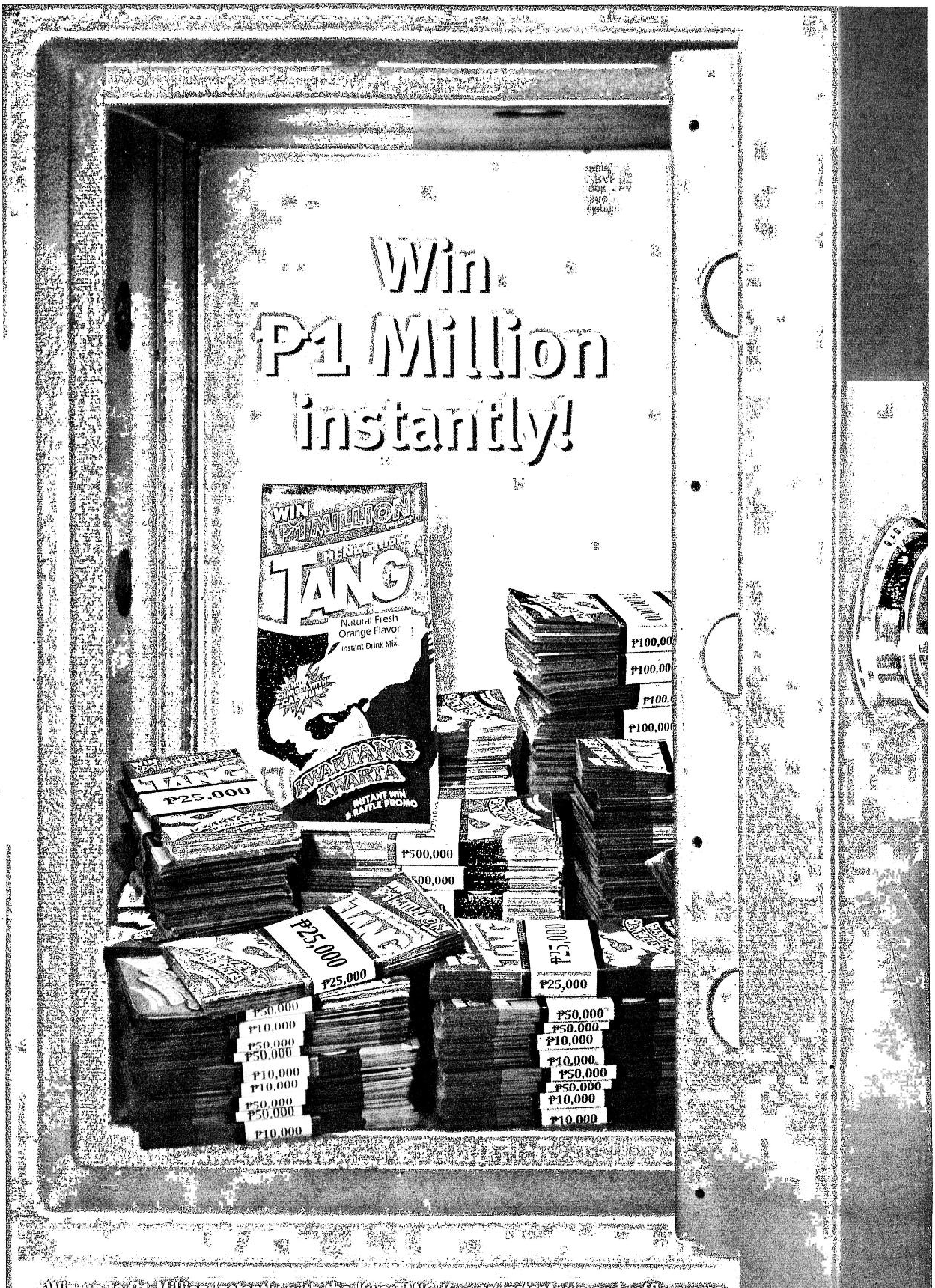


## Win up to ₱1 Million instantly with the KwarTANG-Kwarta instant win and raffle promo

[illegible]

Napakadaling manalo! Bumili lang ng TANG Orange KwarTANG-Kwarta packs: 250g, 500g, 750g, o 1Kg. Ingatan ang pagbukas ng inyong KwarTANG-Kwarta pack at humanap ng isang game row na may 4 na pare-parehong halaga ng premyo. At iyon ang premyong napanalunan mo. See sample below:

[illegible]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 winner | - ₱1,000,000 | 200 winners | - ₱5,000 |
| 3 winners | - ₱100,000 | 800 winners | - ₱1,000 |
| 5 winners | - ₱25,000 | 3,620 winners | - ₱500 |

[illegible]

Kung walang winning match sa inyong KwarTANG-Kwarta pack, pwede pa rin kayong manalo sa preliminary at grand raffle draws. May pagkakataon kayong manalo ng ₱10,000 at ₱100,000 sa preliminary draw sa Feb. 2, 2002 at ₱1 million sa grand draw sa March 9, 2002 na parehong gaganapin sa Eat Bulaga. Isulat lang sa isang pirasong papel ang inyong name, address, telephone number at signature. Ilagay ito sa isang white envelope kasama ng KwarTANG-Kwarta pack at ipadala sa TANG KWARTANG-KWARTA RAFFLE PROMO c/o Eat Bulaga, Broadway Centrum, Aurora Blvd., Quezon City 1109.

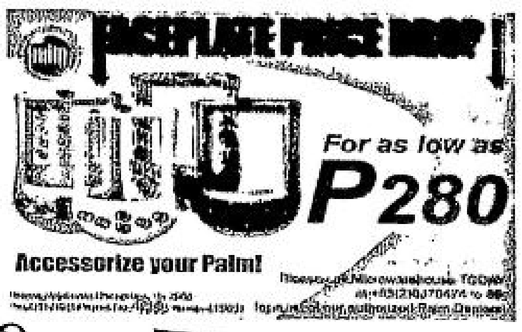
Prizes to be raffled off are as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 winner | - ₱1,000,000 | Grand Draw (March 9, 2002) |
| 3 winners | - ₱100,000 | Preliminary Draw (February 2, 2002) |
| 10 winners | - ₱10,000 | Preliminary Draw (February 2, 2002) |

[illegible]

Madaling mag-claim ng cash prize. Dalhin lang ang winning KwarTANG-Kwarta pack sa pinakamalapit na Bank of the Philippine Islands branch. Pumunta sa New Accounts personnel na tutulong sa inyong pag-claim ng cash prize. Magdala lang ng isa sa alin mang valid IDs: Company / School ID, Driver's license, Passport, SSS o TIN. Maaaring mag-claim ng cash prizes hanggang 60 days pagkatapos ng promo period.

Promo runs from November 15, 2001 to March 15, 2002. [illegible]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Accessorize your Palm!

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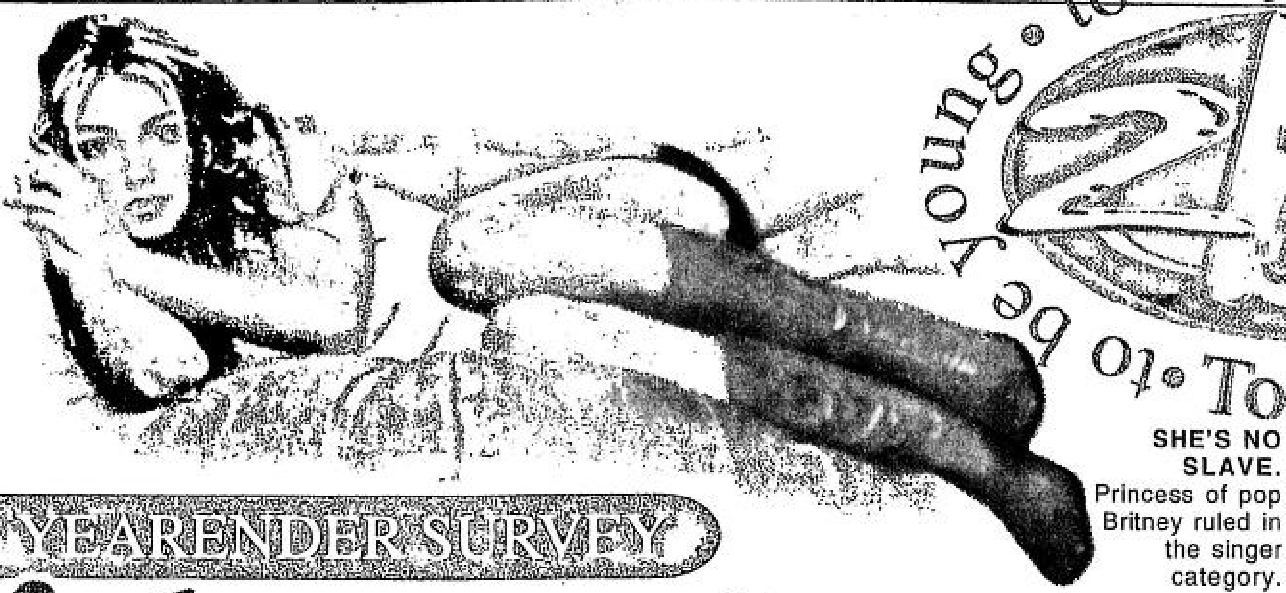
2bU

Mariah Carey is voted worst singer while Britney grabs the top spot, ripped jeans and all


**SHE'S NO SLAVE.** Princess of pop Britney ruled in the singer category.

**DULL.** Mariah Carey is the star that failed to glitter.

## THE 2BU! YEARENDER SURVEY

# The victors and the vanquished of 2001

**FOR WEEKS, the 2bU! office was swamped with e-mail, fax messages and snail mail from readers who exercised their right to vote. (As of this moment, the deadline blatantly ignored, votes are still pouring in.) Using our categories, they came up with their lists of 2001 hits and misses.**

The time that we should have spent on shopping for gifts, wrapping them and generally preparing for the holidays went instead into opening of envelopes and making sure each entry was valid.

We had to disqualify many entries—several hundred would be a close estimate—because of questionable authenticity. Please, the next time you decide to pull one over us, make sure you don't: use the same envelopes, pens, paper, handwriting; mail the letters on the same date in the same post office; mass produce answers by using green printer ink and then just putting different names on top; make the same errors in countless entries (Horry Potter? Julia Robet? Eazel Dizon?). Next time, try harder. You wasted money, time and effort—and tons of paper, too. We didn't have to be detectives to figure out what you were up to.

By the way, Lance Raymundo, congratulations! You've got a bunch of overzealous fans on your hands.

Now, for the results.

While some winners are predictable, the others proved surprising. Ladies and gentlemen, the winners and losers of the year 2001 are:

### Music

Music fans were in a frenzy, trying to get their favorites in. The result? A triple tie for the best band category—The Corrs, Linkin Park and Backstreet Boys. The worst? 2bU! readers said they wanted to hear less of 'N Sync. Linkin Park's "In the End" was favorite song while "Pop" got the thumbs-down.

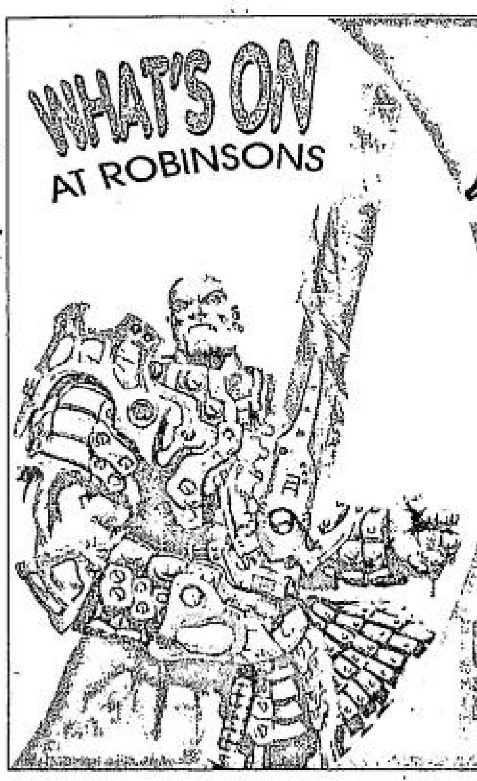
Hitting the high notes just isn't enough anymore. Mariah Carey was voted worst singer while Britney grabbed the top spot, ripped jeans and all. Magic 89.9 was once again best radio station of the year while readers stayed away from 101.1 and

THE VICTORS/ p.D2

© Stewart Shining

**'N SYNC.** Sorry, their balloon went "Pop."

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS



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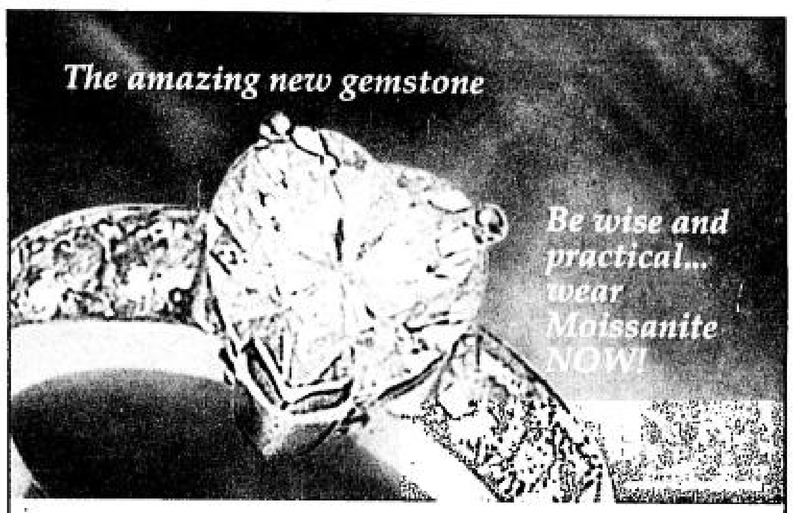
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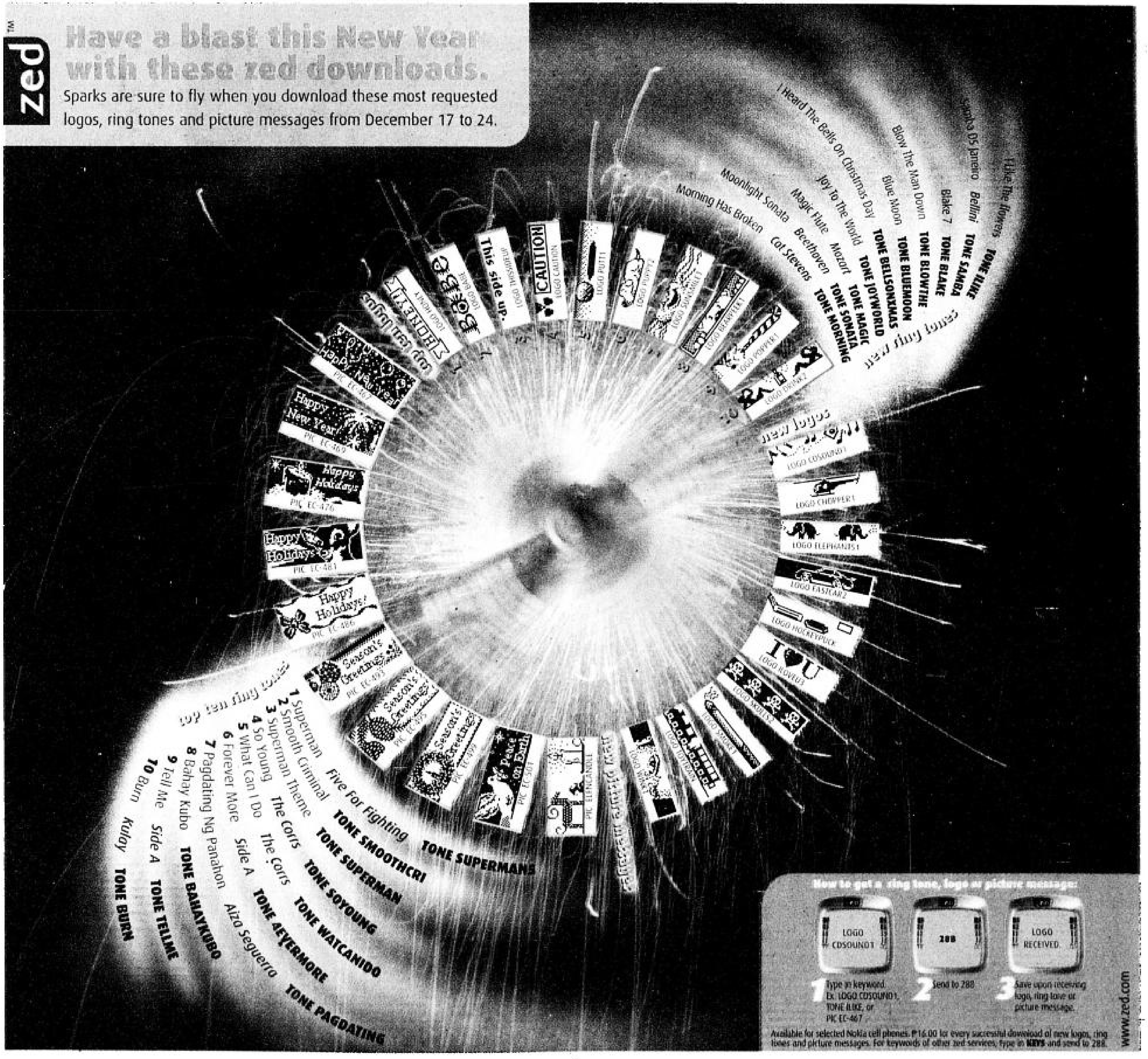
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Have a blast this New Year with these zed downloads.

Sparks are sure to fly when you download these most requested logos, ring tones and picture messages from December 17 to 24.

new ring tones

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I Like The Flowers | | TONE ILIKE |
| Samba Di Janeiro | Bellini | TONE SAMBA |
| Blake 7 | | TONE BLAKE |
| Blow The Man Down | | TONE BLOWTHE |
| Blue Moon | | TONE BLUEMOON |
| I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day | | TONE BELLSONXMAS |
| Joy To The World | | TONE JOYWORLD |
| Magic Flute | Mozart | TONE MAGIC |
| Moonlight Sonata | Beethoven | TONE SONATA |
| Morning Has Broken | Cat Stevens | TONE MORNING |

top ten ring tones

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Superman | Five For Fighting | TONE SUPERMANS |
| 2 | Smooth Criminal | | TONE SMOOTHCRI |
| 3 | Superman Theme | | TONE SUPERMAN |
| 4 | So Young | The Corrs | TONE SOYOUNG |
| 5 | What Can I Do | The Corrs | TONE WATCANIDO |
| 6 | Forever More | Side A | TONE 4EVERMORE |
| 7 | Pagdating Ng Panahon | Aiza Seguerra | TONE PAGDATING |
| 8 | Bahay Kubo | | TONE BAHAYKUBO |
| 9 | Tell Me | Side A | TONE TELLME |
| 10 | Burn | Kulay | TONE BURN |

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1 Type in keyword. Ex. LOGO CDSOUND1, TONE ILIKE, or PIC EC-467
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Available for selected Nokia cell phones. P16.00 for every successful download of new logos, ring tones and picture messages. For keywords of other zed services, type in KEYS and send to 288.

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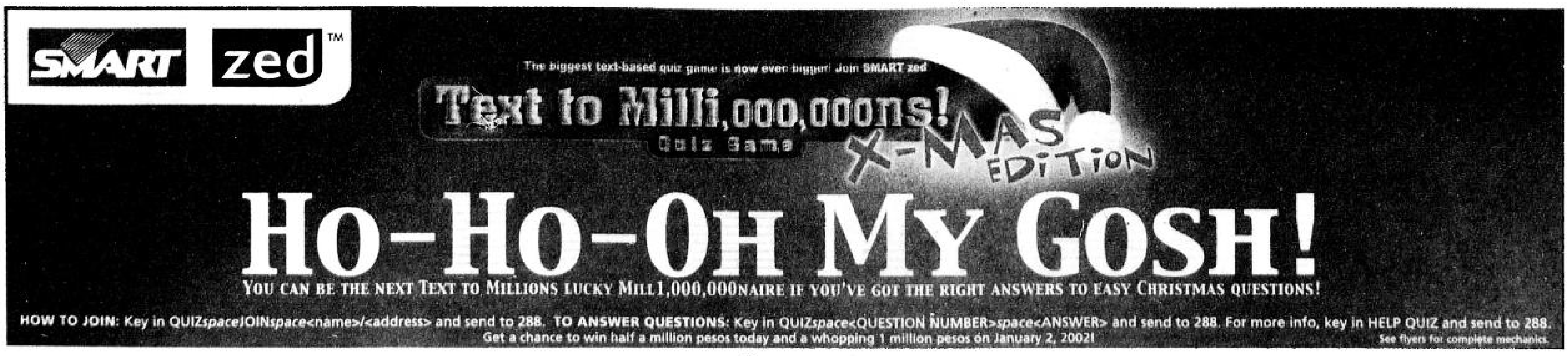
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Get a chance to win half a million pesos today and a whopping 1 million pesos on January 2, 2002!
See flyers for complete mechanics.

**2BU!** readers are still hung over after the major concerts. The Corrs made it to the top spot.

**THE ALL-STAR** group behind the hit, "What's Going On?"

**BEHIND THE SCENES** at the filming of this year's best video.

**BACKSTREET** Boys fans are still at it.

# The victors and the vanquished of 2001

(From page D1)

101.9. The star-studded video of "What's Going On?" was the year's top video. Regine Velasquez, 2bU! readers think your videos need a major makeover.

J. Lo's and Garbage's album tied for best album packaging. Locally, Rayyn's innovative album cover by Three Fates grabbed the attention of 2bU! readers. Readers also agreed on one thing. Mariah's "Glitter" was definitely not eye candy.

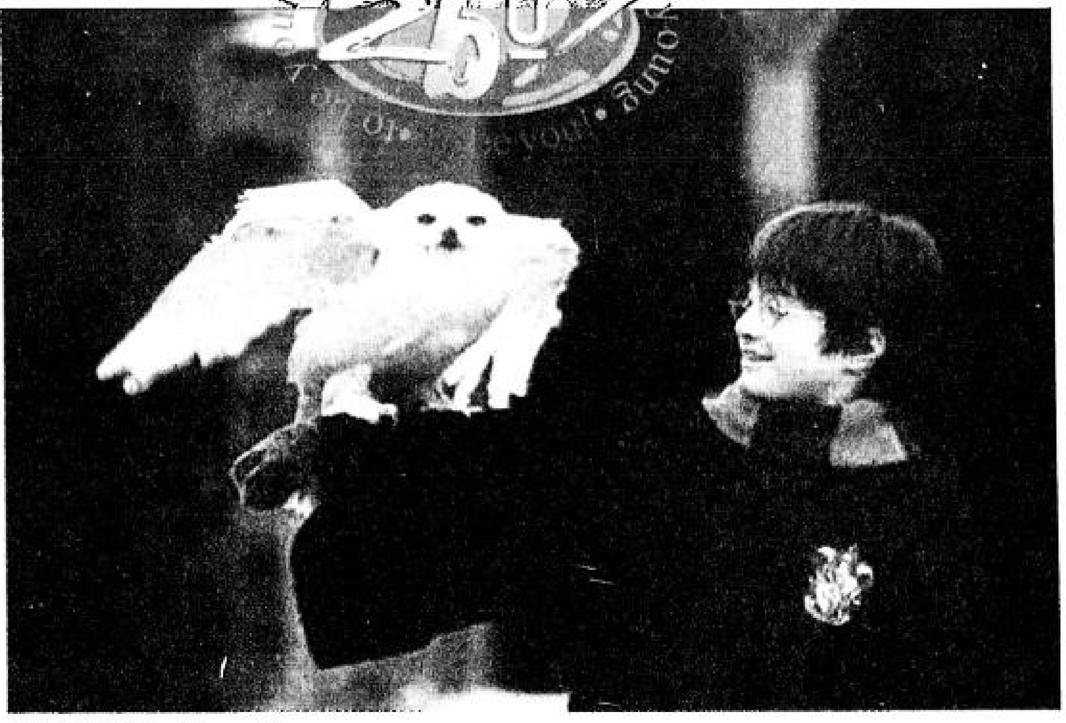
## Film

Not surprisingly, "Harry Potter" was voted best movie—no other film came close. The voters said "Scary Movie 2" was an insult to their sensibilities. When 2bU! readers wanted to enjoy the big screen, they head for the PowerPlant or the Glorietta 4 Cinemas (the latter lost by only one vote). They avoided the theaters in SM Megamall.

Ewan McGregor got the thumbs-up for his performance in "Moulin Rouge" while Tom Green hit a dead end. Julia Roberts (that is spelled with two Rs and an "s") was still everyone's favorite actress. If the 2bU! readers would have anything to say about it, a career change might be in order for Tori Spelling, who was voted worst movie actress of the year.

## Fashion

Women readers just adored Christian Vasquez and Marcus Schenkenberg, but felt the modeling world could do better without Carlos Agassi. Sarah Meier was everyone's favorite model—waif Kate Moss wasn't. Rajo Laurel remained the most popular designer while Guess still was the favorite clothes brand.



**MUGGLES** just love Harry.

**EWAN** bags this year's best actor award.

**BEST** writer J.K. Rowling's magic never seems to run out.

**BEST MOVIE—NOT.** "Scary Movie 2" should be shelved or, better yet, shredded.

When 2bU! readers hit the mall, they usually dropped by Kamiseta, their store of choice. Following closely were Anonymous, Human, Bayo and People R People. Garrison belts and Nike Prestos were the hottest trends to hit the country, according to the readers, who were more than willing to say goodbye to the elephant pants.

Must-have accessories of 2001 were hoop earrings while fake Tiffany & Co. bracelets should be consigned to the trash bin, thank you. Madonna was still the No. 1 fashion icon. Locally, Tessa Prieto-Valdez's personal style created an impact on women readers. Jolina Magdangal's sense of style was still apparently not for everyone.

**SEE** Sarah strut her stuff. She wins model of the year.

## Health and beauty

Lip shiners and chapsticks were still the things that should fill up those *kikay* kits. Very bright nail polish colors went from hip to tacky. When readers wanted to be primped, they headed over to David's Salon. Long or short hair? The votes were divided right down the middle. They all agreed on one thing, though—too much hair color was uncool. Readers kept fit by doing yoga and tae-bo. Liposuction was—and would most probably always be—a no-no on their list.

**DROOL-WORTHY.** Female readers just looove Marcus.

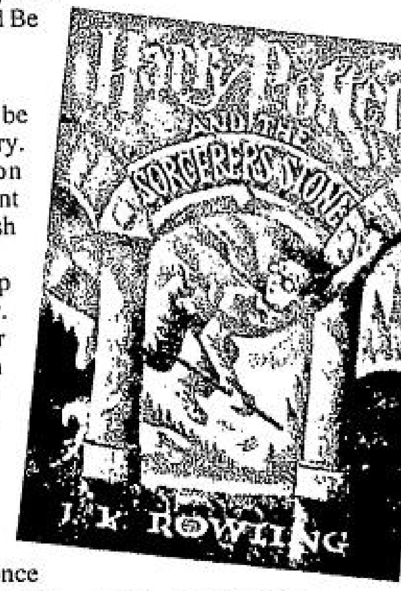
## Literature

Like we have to tell you. "Harry Potter" and its creator J.K. Rowling were chosen best book and writer hands-down. 2bU! readers left "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books and Danielle Steele novels on the shelves to gather dust. Magazines that 2bU! readers liked were FHM, Candy and Chalk. They passed up Yes! and Be in the newsstands.

## Food

Friday's was the place to be when 2bU! readers got hungry. A close second was Don Henrico's. Whichever restaurant they went to, a must-order dish was *sisig*.

The giants tied for the top spot in the fast-food category. 2bU! readers headed to either McDonald's or Jollibee when in need of a quick fix. Chowking, for them, needs major improvements.



**WHO** hasn't read Harry Potter?

## Sports

Michael Jordan was voted both best and worst athlete. The Green Archers were once again the UAAP team of the year. They beat the Blue Eagles by one measly point. Readers believed the FEU Tamaraws need a lot of practice.

## Television

The readers were riveted to the screen when the McDonald's "Karen-Gina" commercial was shown. They switched channels when PLDT's Billy was on. "Survivor" and "Sex and the City" were the top favorite shows and they thought the TV Guide would not lack for materials even without "Jackass" and "Jenny Jones."

Sarah Jessica Parker was the favorite TV gal and, despite the dwindling popularity of "Dawson's Creek," Joshua Jackson was still their main TV man. The Hunks and Judy Anne Santos all got the thumbs-down. Donita was still everyone's favorite VJ. Belinda, they said, has to get rid of a few habits. MTV was still the music channel of choice.

**THE GIRLS** of "Sex and the City," this year's best TV show, which shares the honor with "Survivor."

## Technology

Pinoyexchange.com was once again website of the year. Nothing surprising about that. The Nokia 8310 was the gadget of choice, with Palm Pilots following closely. Beepers were totally unhip—throw them out, or else. Counter-strike was both best and worst game of 2001.

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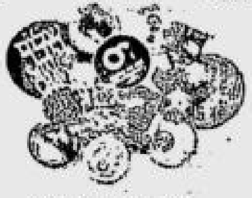
**PINS** that match the preppie look



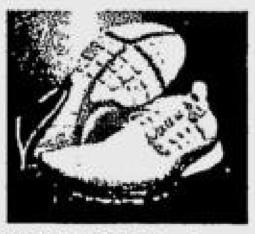
**CUTE** buttons for schoolboy bags

**WE** love the military look.

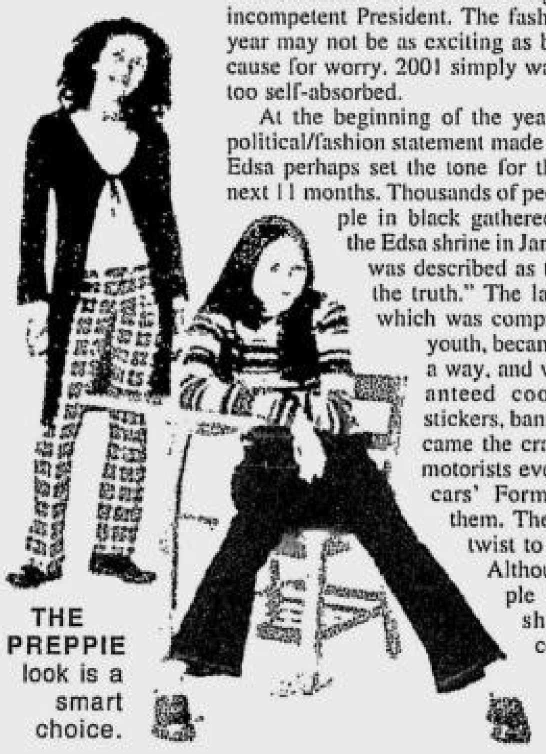
**WIDE** belt—hit accessory of the season

# SOMBER 2001 HAVE PEOPLE OPTING FOR FUNCTION, NOT STYLE

**By Jason L. Doplito**
*2bU! Correspondent*



**NIKE** Presto—a guy's must-have

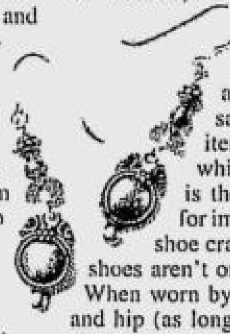


**THE PREPPIE** look is a smart choice.

BEING fashionable and trendy wasn't at the forefront of most people's, and even teenagers', concern. With the many problems, even tragedies, that we all had to contend with, it seemed inappropriate to make style a priority in our to-do checklist. While dressing up and accessorizing are already part of our routine, trends this year reflected functionality more than style. They even became a means for showing frustration over an incompetent President. The fashion and trends this year may not be as exciting as before but that's no cause for worry. 2001 simply wasn't the year to be too self-absorbed.

At the beginning of the year, the political/fashion statement made in Edsa perhaps set the tone for the next 11 months. Thousands of people in black gathered at the Edsa shrine in January to mourn what was described as the "suppression of the truth." The latest People Power, which was comprised mostly of the youth, became a hip gathering in a way, and wearing black guaranteed coolness. Anti-Erap stickers, banners and posters became the craze back then, with motorists even exchanging their cars' Formula One look for them. The event gave a new twist to the word activism. Although the young people had fun, they also showed that they could get together for a cause.

When a new President was installed and things were back to normal, a new revolution hit the streets. The military look became the fashion of the season, with Filipinos doing a good adaptation of the European version. Instead of heavy and too-hot-for-comfort army jackets, the local military trend spawned camouflage shirts, bags, belts and shoes. Men wore fatigue pants even on a non-ROTC day and became part of the *gimik* wardrobe. The military look was also the perfect excuse to wear those rarely used boots.



Garrison belts were worn with ordinary jeans. The rule was not to wear those things at the same time. It was not chic to don military stuff from head to toe, unless you were a cadet or wanted to look like one.

## Astroboy meets Lara Croft

Around this time the skater boy look started to emerge. Guys were now growing their hair, just long enough to be able to flip over at the sides and back. Jeans were less baggy, and shirts were worn in twos: long-sleeved under one with short sleeves. T-shirts became bigger than polos, especially vintage and non-branded ones. Specialty stores like Defect and 1:15 had Astroboy, Superman and even Nora Aunor printed on the shirts. Others had one word, usually an adjective, running across the front. Among the most common were "rocker," "porn star" and "actress." Other shirts carried far more "colorful" words.

While some girls might have found Lara Croft, the kick-ass chick, world-saver, fashionably dull, for others she became the character they wanted to be. Dozens of Lara Croft-wannabes were seen in costume parties as the "Tomb Raider" movie became an instant hit. Other women preferred a more feminine look, updating the accessories they already had. They passed up the hoop earrings for the drop or dangling version. Many teenagers had stretchable belts in monochromatic stripes, while the height-enhancing wedge shoes became fashionable with the younger ones. The sole of these shoes were so thick they looked like elephant feet.

And speaking of shoes, two new lines from Nike made practically everyone drool. First on the list is, of course, the best-selling Presto. The shoes' thematic models (they were named after moods such as Rage and Jealousy) caught everyone's attention that by the time you had saved the money to buy them, the items were out of stock. The second, which is relatively new in the country, is the Shox. It promises better cushion for improved walking/jumping. A bowling shoe craze also hit the market recently. The shoes aren't only comfy, they are trendy as well. When worn by dad, they make him look younger and hip (as long as he doesn't push it). Definitely, shoes have never looked this good.

## Pearl-crazy

It is hard to trace the history of this delight especially with many companies claiming to have introduced it into the local market. But pearl shakes definitely stormed the scene this year. Practically every name has already been thought up for the hundreds of pearl shake stalls that have mushroomed. And we all just love them (at least the few original ones), that we don't mind standing in line for at least 10 minutes to savor the hit concoctions. Too bad business has started to slow down for our beloved pearl shakes with too many stalls opening up. Now we are seeing a pearl shakes recession.

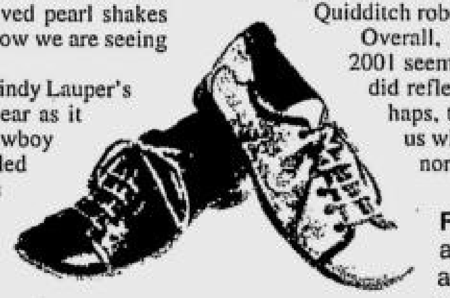
Fashion went back to the '80s. Cindy Lauper's style would have been cool this year as it was 20 years ago. Last year's cowboy look and the denim jacket also spilled over to this year. The jacket has already become a classic after its explosive debut in 2000. The grunge, rebel and rocker looks were also in the scene this year.

**ASTHON** Kutcher's 'do (left) is just right for the skater look.

Girls in beret, leather skirts and knee-high boots and guys in sleeveless shirts, wide studded belts and tight-fit jeans were the norm in parties. Graffiti prints were hot, with some finding their way into bags and shirts. Usually, the prints carried messages of individualism, or just plain curses. Flowers were also big, not only printed on fabric and stuff but also (synthetic type) as brooches. Guys also tried the preppie look, looking smart in a crisp white polo shirt, vest and checkered pants.

The entertainment personalities, of course, would always inspire teenagers' fashion choices. So when Madonna wore a shirt held together only by safety pins, or stockings with large holes in them, some people followed suit. Young girls started to dress rather skimpily after Britney Spears did it. The year saw Destiny's Child, Jennifer Lopez, Lenny Kravitz, 'N Sync and Gwen Stefani as music's fashion icons. From cinema, Lady Marmalade had women trying to bring out their sensuality through restricting corsets, romantic frills and fringes. With Harry Potter's worldwide success, everything associated with the sorcerer-in-training (read: the merchandise) is being grabbed—action figures, movie posters, Quidditch robe, Hogwarts bags.

Overall, the fashion and trends of 2001 seemed more retrospective and did reflect too many changes. Perhaps, this was good for many of us who just wanted things to be normal.



**FORGET** the bowling alley. These shoes are for hitting the runways.

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# Celebrities that made 2001 shine

BY JULES ALCANTARA

**FORGET Osama bin Laden and Philip Medel. When we say celebrities, we mean faces that make us smile, not frown. Live a little and remember these celebrities who, in more ways than one, made this year's roller-coaster ride a truly memorable one.**

### Jericho Rosales and Kristine Hermosa

Okay, you can come out of your closet now and admit that you have become a certified soap opera addict. Go ahead—you have Jericho and Kristine to blame for that. "Pangako sa Yo" has indeed become a promise fulfilled with these two heading the cast. And not just because they look pretty on even the most jaded of eyes, but also because they do have that one thing that seems to be miserably lacking in those ubiquitous wannabes: talent. And the romance, you ask? Well, whether for real or for reel, it's really none of our beeswax (or so it is supposed to be). Just as long as the soap does fulfill its "*pangako*" to you and me—that Yna and Angelo end up together in the end.

AIZA Seguerra

### Aiza Seguerra

Aiza Seguerra has become a master at breaking and entering. She entered show biz and broke the mold not by becoming the usual overacting, overcoached and overemoting child star, but by being her naughty, smart, precocious self. When she was fast approaching the awkward stage, she took a different route. Instead of letting the viewing public witness her transformation from lovable child star to an overgrown miscast in the most popular noon time show in the history of television, she took a break and went to school. And just when the industry was in desperate need for somebody to break the monotony of prettified wannabes, boy bands and musical entities who looked and sounded the same, Aiza Seguerra broke again into the scene, this time as a singer, with the hit single of the year "Pagdating ng Panahon." Indeed, her time has come.

THE YOUNG people at Edsa II

### Carlo Munoz, 'Billy'

You probably live on the edge of the world if you haven't said hello to Carlo Munoz, or as he is more popularly known in the PLDT commercial, Billy. There was a collective swoon heard among females when he first graced the TV screen. And as a gay friend puts it, "Finally, a face to my white-picket fence fantasizes." To be sure, his devoted fans will surely lament at the news that the latest installment of the popular PLDT TVC will be its last. People have outgrown Billy. We want to see more of Carlo Munoz, the actor.

### Gina Celso, 'Gracia'

Stunned was the populace when they first met Gracia. And why not? Gina Celso was just way too stunning—it seemed like the Thesaurus just did not have enough words that describe her beauty. Hey, Gracia may be married by now, but who cares, right? No one has gotten over Gina and people can't seem to get enough of the mysterious Filipino-Norwegian lass.

CHRISTIAN Vasquez

### Franco Mabanta, 'Jasper'

Didn't we all adore Jasper and his fumbling ways? Didn't Jasper remind us of the clown in our *barkada*, the one who always made us laugh and cringe with embarrassment, the one who we actually had a secret crush on? Franco Mabanta's star turn as Jasper in the popular Coke commercial would surely be remembered in the months to come.

### Christian Vasquez

Last year, we included Christian in our list of stars who would truly make it this year. Of course, that prediction proved correct—Christian Vasquez has indeed arrived. When the PLDT commercial came out, everyone asked the same question: Who's that guy? By now, we all have made him our favorite Ilonggo boy. Admit it or not, Christian became an integral part of our day-dreaming. Didn't we all wish we went to medical school (then maybe he wouldn't have changed his mind about becoming a doctor)? Or if not, didn't we all wish we were students of the arts so we would be there to welcome him with open arms when he enters the college of fine arts? Didn't we all wish we could be there with him and hold his hand as he made that phone call to his daddy? Well, I know I would. Not only would I hold his hand, I would really support him all the way.

### Amanda Griffin

Video jock, model, in-demand product endorser and cover girl and now entrepreneur, Amanda Griffin has got it made. Who would have thought this terribly shy looker would virtually hold monopoly of our attention, particularly the males among us? It is so easy to make her a target of the green-eyed monster. But how can one be jealous of Amanda when despite all the success, she has managed to stay humble and grounded?

## Sports personalities

Undoubtedly, the year 2001 is the year of collegiate basketball. Yes, we did gain recognition in the world of golf, karate and boxing and the excitement over professional basketball has not at all waned. Major adventure races such as the Urban Jungle Adventure were held this year, much to the delight of adventure-loving athletes. But it would be no exaggeration to say that all eyes were definitely fixed on the UAAP and the NCAA, specifically basketball. Here are some of the sports figure who made headlines this year.

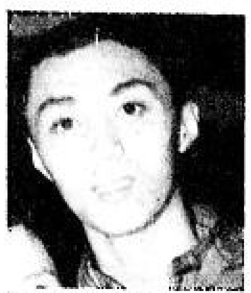
AMANDA Griffin

### Renren Ritualo

From the moment he stepped on the basketball court, everyone knew that former San Beda Red Cub and now DLSU Green Archer was born to play basketball. Not just talented and gifted, Ritualo redefined the term "crunch time" by being the premier clutch player of college basketball. Ritualo could literally shoot the lights out of any player in the league. His talent did not go unnoticed. He has practically won every award in the UAAP, except the MVP. He has given the most "value" to his team by helping it win its fourth straight championship. We expect no less from him when he joins the PBA next year.

### Danny Ildefonso

If winning the MVP title is a precondition to being called the best player in the PBA, then Danny I. is indeed the best player in the professional league. Forget that Danny I. is prone to making turnovers. No one can dispute that he has evolved into SMB's most valuable asset and most powerful center.


RENREN Ritualo

### Dorothy Delasin

Last year's Rookie of the Year in the LPGA, Dorothy made headlines when she beat the likes of golf superstars Karrie Webb and Se Ri Pak, who is widely considered as the female Tiger Woods. On her second year as a professional golfer, Dorothy's major strides have put our country in the world golf map. Did we also mention that Dorothy is only 21?

### Mike Cortez

Called "Cool Cat," his monicker is very much appropriate. Cool and calm, he led the DLSU Green Archers to victory in the most anticipated basketball game of the year, Game 3 of the Ateneo-La Salle UAAP finals. Scoring 23 points, 7 rebounds and 7 assists, he, together with his teammates, prevailed in the end game with, mark this down, 0 turnovers. No mistakes in the most crucial, stressful, tension-filled game of the year.

### L. A. Tenorio

The missing equation in the so-called Dream Team, the Ateneo Blue Eagles—this is how the general public regards the former San Beda Red Cub superstar. From his first game up to the UAAP finals, the diminutive point guard towered above the UAAP giants with his spunk and will to win. Fearless and gutsy, he proved to be the much-needed impetus for the talented but underachieving team from Katipunan. With new coach Joel Banal on the team, LA could very well lead his team to the finals next year for the next big fight.

### Gretchen Malalad

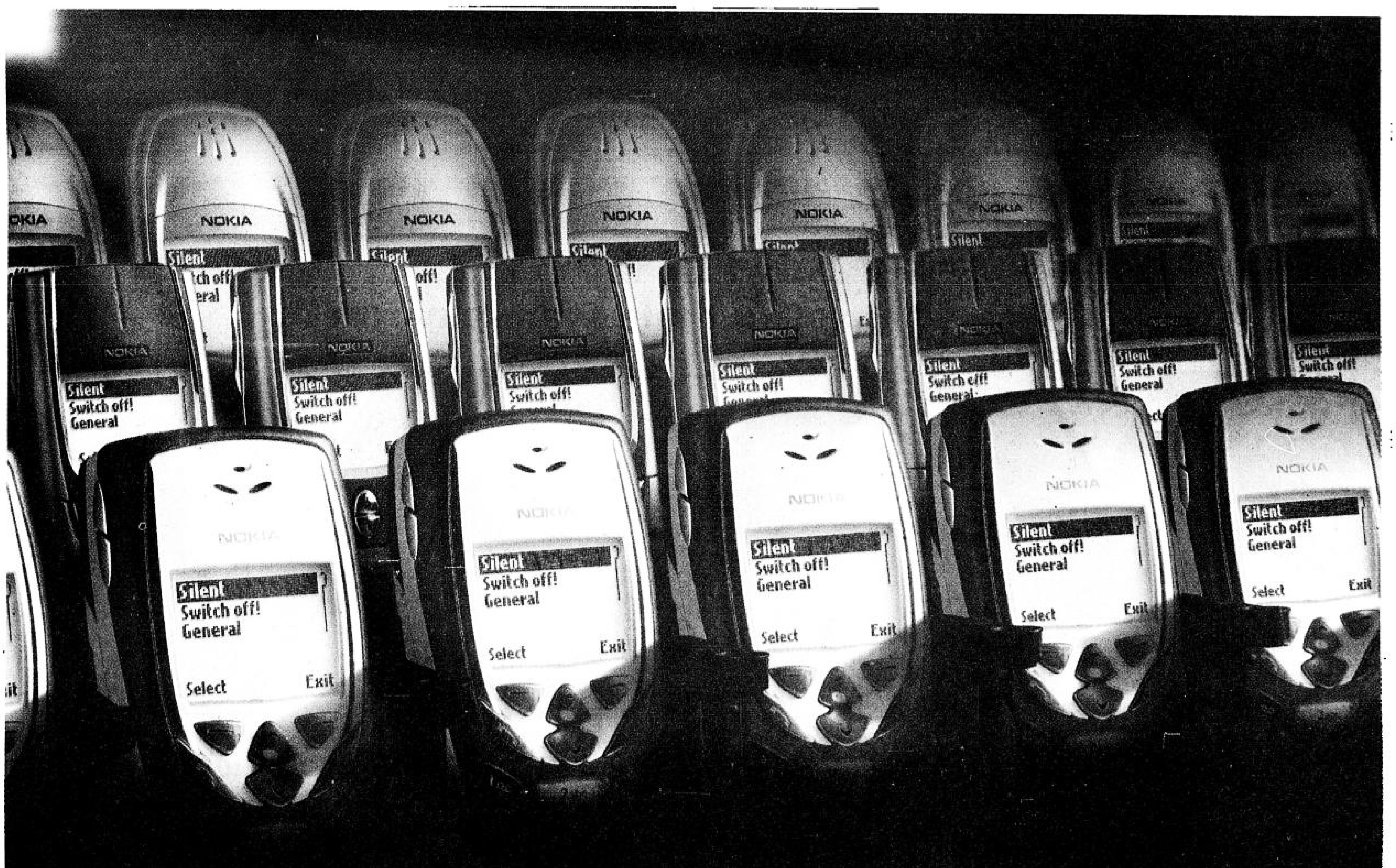
Gretchen made the headlines when she won the gold in karatedo against Meity Johana Kaseger of Indonesia. People were easily enamored of her—you were either torn between falling in love with her moviestar looks and angelic demeanor or falling flat on your face in fear of her mean karate chops. She's now training for the Asian Games next year. One can't help but wish that she take on a second job—sashaying the ramp as a model.

### Mark Caguioa

Fondly called Mark the Spark by the fans of Barangay Ginebra, Mark Caguioa never fails to amaze PBA fans with his three-pointers and crunch-time heroics. This is one Fil-Am who will never be booted out of the country. He may have spent a significant part of his life in the US, but he can certainly say he is very much home-grown—you can tell that by his never-die spirit.

### The young people at Edsa II

Yes, we are the celebrities of the year. We, the young people of this generation, became the deciding factor in the downfall of a corrupt president. The people might not have been able to open that infamous envelope, but that did not stop the young people from pressing the issue of good government and moral leadership. The euphoria that accompanied Edsa II may have died down by now. But we in 2bU hope that we, the young people, will never cease to remember that we can overcome apathy and go out of our way to make a stand for the nation.


Turn off your mobile phone or switch to silent mode inside the moviehouse.

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